
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

<http://books.google.com>



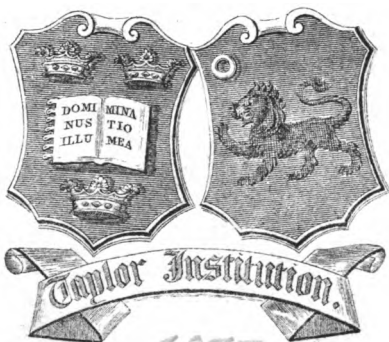
ST. JOHN NEPOMUCEN



A. H. WRATISLAW, M. A.

✓
~~59.C.22.~~

Presented to
the



1877

from the
collection

~~BR65.J6.Z6.W9~~

TNR 13653

✓
From the Author.



302706762X

BY THE SAME.

THE ADVENTURES OF BARON WENCESLAS

WRATISLAW OF MITROWITZ; what he saw in the Turkish Metropolis, Constantinople, experienced in his Captivity, and after his happy return to his country committed to writing in the year of our Lord 1599; literally translated from the original Bohemian. London: Bell and Daldy, 1862. 6s. 6d.

“This book, which contains an account of the Turkish captivity and release of a young Bohemian nobleman at the end of the sixteenth century, is as interesting as a story by Defoe, and more instructive, inasmuch as the incidents are true, and are most suggestively illustrative of the condition of the Turks at the close of the sixteenth century, and the relations then subsisting between them and Christendom. Many a reader will be thankful to the successor of Dr. Donaldson for having undertaken this translation from the Bohemian of a narrative, which is not only of considerable historical value, but is also written in a style of such simplicity and pure and manly taste, as would do honour to any literature in Europe at that period.”—*Saturday Review*.

DIARY OF AN EMBASSY from KING GEORGE of BOHEMIA to KING LOUIS XI. of FRANCE in the year of Grace 1464, from a contemporary manuscript, literally translated from the original Slavonic. London: Bell and Daldy, 1871. 3s. 6d.

“Mr. Wratislaw deserves the thanks of Western scholars for introducing them to this curious little volume, which should find a place in every learned library.”—*Academy*.

A

NOTES AND DISSERTATIONS, principally on
Difficulties of the Scriptures of the New Covenant.
London : Bell and Daldy.. 7s. 6d.

“ Mr. Wratislaw's Dissertations often claim, not without justice, the rank of new and independent contributions towards the correct appreciation of the subjects of which they treat. They deal, too, with texts or topics which have been from ancient times themes of controversy among expositors and theologians. He exhibits throughout high attainments and abilities as a scholar and much independence and honesty as a theologian.”—*Guardian*.

“ Mr. Wratislaw is a very straightforward critic, who does not consider the duty of the illustrator of the New Testament writings to be adequately performed by repeating a mass of opinions and leaving difficulties just as they were before.”—*Westminster Review*.

LONDON : BELL AND DALDY, YORK ST., COVENT GARDEN.



ST. JOHN NEPOMUCEN.



LIFE, LEGEND, AND CANONIZATION
OF
ST. JOHN NEPOMUCEN,
PATRON SAINT AND PROTECTOR OF THE
ORDER OF THE JESUITS.

BY A. H. WRATISLAW, M.A.,
HEAD MASTER OF THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, BURY ST. EDMUND'S, AND
FORMERLY FELLOW AND TUTOR OF CHRIST'S
COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.



LONDON:
BELL AND DALDY, YORK STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.
1873.

CHISWICK PRESS:—PRINTED BY WHITTINGHAM AND WILKINS,
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

TO THE OLDEST BRITISH MEMBER OF
THE MATICE CZESKA,
THE RIGHT REVEREND CONNOP THIRLWALL, D.D.,
LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S,
THE FOLLOWING INVESTIGATION OF A QUESTION IN BOHEMIAN
HISTORY IS, BY EXPRESS PERMISSION, RESPECTFULLY
DEDICATED BY A YOUNGER MEMBER OF
THE SAME SOCIETY.





LIFE, LEGEND, AND CANONIZATION OF ST. JOHN NEPOMUCEN.

HERE is a saint honoured to an extraordinary extent, both in his native land of Bohemia and elsewhere, and considered the patron and protector of bridges throughout the Roman Catholic world, whose name in Bohemian is "Svatý Jan Nepomucký," "St. John of Nepomuk," or, as commonly expressed in other regions, in mutilated Latin, "St. John Nepomucen." The peasantry in Bohemia are said to venerate him as the bestower of rain and dew; lovers see in him the protector of their aspirations, and hope from him the fulfilment of their wishes, and his statue on the Emperor Charles the Fourth's bridge at Prague is honoured with garlands, nosegays, and plants of rosemary in pots, bestowed by the fair hands of maidens in every station of life. But perhaps the highest distinction he has received is, his solemn election to the position of Second Patron and Protector of the great Society of the Jesuits, our Blessed Lord himself being, as their name denotes,

the first and original patron of their company. These honours and this high position in the saintly hierarchy, he has obtained through no common merits and no common martyrdom, but as the proto-martyr of the confessional, the defender of the secrets of the heart of a pious queen against the morbid curiosity of a wicked king.

“Such a phenomenon,” writes J. M. Schottký,¹ “had not yet existed in the Church; with good reason, therefore, might DE MARNE in his work, ‘The Martyr of the Secrecy of the Confessional,’ maintain that he possessed all those virtues by which great saints are formed in the gloom of solitude, apostles in the practice of holy zeal, and martyrs in the endurance of violent punishment. Besides this, the cause of his faithful endurance even unto death was an entirely novel one, and, as the piety of the confessional had never before put weapons into the hands of tyrants, never yet had any victim been sacrificed for this inviolable principle of the practice of spiritual religion. What has already been stated will partially explain the far and wide spread reverence paid to the saint, which increased still more after the Jesuits had recognized him as the Second Patron and Protector of their Order. This statement is evidenced, amongst other things, by the work published at Antwerp in 1738 by the Jesuit WIELANDS: ‘The Life of the Glorious Martyr, Johannes Nepomucenus,’ in which we read, p. 187: ‘His Holiness Pope Clement XII., moved by especial favour towards the Order of Jesuits, granted it Saint

¹ “Die Karolinische Zeit.” Prag. 1830; page 29.

John of Nepomuk, as its Patron Saint and Protector against all their blasphemers and false accusers.' The sixth General of the Order, Father Francis, gave injunctions in consequence to proclaim the fame of the saint in all quarters; and thus in Antwerp first of all, in the Profession-House of the Jesuits, a statue of white marble was erected with the inscription 'DIVVS Ioannes nepoMVCenVs soCIetatIs IesV patronVs,' (St. John Nepomucen, Patron of the Society of Jesus, 1735), which was solemnly consecrated in the presence of streaming multitudes and subsequently greatly revered. Henceforth the Jesuits made it their business to build chapels and churches in honour of the saint in all provinces of their order, or at any rate to erect statues of him; and thus it is easy to understand, that he was not long in finding numerous adorers even in other quarters of the world."

The life, legend, and canonization of a saint so great as this, a saint to whom the credit of so great a society stands pledged, cannot but be matters of interest and importance at a time when the Jesuits are clearly assuming the command of the ecclesiastical armies of Rome in the present phase of the long conflict between the so-called spiritual and temporal authorities on earth. I have for several years devoted more or less attention to this subject, and last year (1872) spent a considerable time in investigating the matter by means of Bohemian sources, from which I have obtained information apparently unknown to either the clerical biographers of the saint, or the German professors, who have undertaken to investigate his history and legend. My best thanks are

due to the Reverend Canonicus Frind, to Pan Vrtátko, the librarian of the National Museum, and to Herr Zeigler, the librarian of the Imperial or University Library, as well as to the writers, whose valuable contributions will be acknowledged in chronological order, and of whose works I have endeavoured to avail myself to the full in the interests of truth. But I have derived the greatest amount of actual information as to the early clerical life of the saint from Professor W. W. TOMEK, whose knowledge of documents accumulated for his as yet unfinished histories of the university and city of Prague is truly marvellous, and whose brief article in the "Nauczny Slovnik" or "Bohemian Encyclopædia," is worth all the works of the saint's other biographers put together. My intention is to proceed upon a purely chronological method, thus exhibiting every "moment" as the Germans call it, in the cultus of the saint as it occurred, and noting every change in feeling or idea respecting him.

JOHN OF POMUK, otherwise called JOHANEK or JOHANKO, was the son of a citizen of a little town in Bohemia, in early times usually, though not exclusively, called POMUK, in modern times exclusively NEPOMUK, *i. e.*, "NOT POMUK," whose name was *Wolflin* or *Welfin*. The date of his birth is not known, but, in 1372, when the first mention of him is made, he was a licensed public writer or notary and a cleric, although not a priest, but belonging to one of the lower orders. In that year he signed himself "John, son of the late Woelflein of Pomuk," in the "Liber Erectionum," or "Book of Foundations"

(ii. B. i.), and also in other documents in the years 1374 and 1378. In 1373 he appears to have obtained the position of chief clerk in the chancery of the Archbishop of Prague, or rather in that of the general vicar of the archbishop, through whose hands almost all the routine business of the diocese seems to have passed. This office he continued to hold till 1381. He appears to have been an excellent man of business, and by no means inattentive to his own interests ; for we learn from Tomek, that documents between 1373 and 1381, which are still in existence, testify to various loans of money made by him to different persons, both lay and clerical, and also to his having been engaged with John, the archbishop's cathedral-clerk, and a certain builder, named Leva, in the joint construction of a house, the site of which cannot be ascertained for certain, in the year 1376. It would seem that he enjoyed the special favour of the Archbishop John Oczko of Vlasim, at whose table he ate in 1375, and from whom, in all probability, he obtained the "Altar-Priesthood" of the chapel of SS. Erhard and Ottilia, in the cathedral-church of St. Vitus, a chapel which the archbishop had built at his own expense. He termed himself "altar-priest" of this chapel on Sept. 6, 1380, the year of the death of Archbishop Oczko ; and, as in 1378 he was merely a "cleric," it is pretty certain that he was ordained priest somewhere between the years 1378 and 1380. In 1380, and in all probability, according to Tomek, before Oct. 18, he obtained the rectory of St. Gallus, in the old town of Prague, although not in the ordinary way by presentation from the patron, but "by virtue of the favour of the Apostolic See." For this

he paid into the Apostolic treasury fourteen "kopy," or "schokk" (a *kopa* or *schokk* is threescore) of Bohemian groschen, as the half of the first year's profits of the living, and was allowed till Sept. 5, 1381, to complete the payment. Through Professor Tomek's kindness I am enabled to give a translation of the receipt, signed by the pope's collector, in acknowledgment of the money.

"1381.

"Arch. Capit. Prag. z. viii.

"We, Nicolas, Canon of Prague and Incumbent of St. Adalbert under the Wissegrad at Prague, also Collector of the fruits and revenues of the benefices of the Apostolic treasury, deputed by the Rev^d Dom. Pavo (Peacock), Bishop of Polignac, and chief collector deputed by the Apostolic See, acknowledge that we have received from Dom. John, Incumbent of the Church of St. Gallus, in the major town of Prague, fourteen "sexagenæ" of Prague groschen as mesne profits of the said church, in ready money. Given at Prague in the year of the Lord, 1381, on the 8th of September."

There appears to have been a certain illegality in this proceeding, which was specially condoned in favour of John of Pomuk, much, I presume, as the statute of provisors was frequently dispensed with by Henry IV. and other kings of England.

John of Pomuk was evidently no MILICZ,¹ a saintly clergyman, who in 1363 resigned the whole of his preferments for the purpose of devoting himself entirely to the preaching of the Word. Nay, he did not even perform the duties of his rectory himself, but

¹ See a full account of Milicz and the other "Precursors of John Hus," in the "Contemporary Review" for February, 1870.

devoted himself to legal studies, placing in his stead a curate (*Vice-plebanus*, or *conventor ecclesiæ*), who performed the duties of the benefice, paying the actual rector a fixed sum out of the proceeds and profits thereof. This was at that time a very common custom in Bohemia, though loudly complained of by the advocates of reform. In 1382 a certain "Kunes" is mentioned as John of Pomuk's representative curate, along with SEVEN other similar curates, who held like positions in seven of the city churches in Prague. To such an extent had this evil custom prevailed, in spite of the example and preaching of the saintly Milicz.

John of Pomuk was entered in the matriculation-book of the University of Prague, in the Faculty of Law, in 1381, and in 1387 obtained the degree of Doctor of Canon Law (*doctor decretorum*). The fees for his degree were remitted, a distinction not unusual in the case of persons of mark and influence. Meanwhile he became also a canon of St. Giles's, which testifies to the favour and high opinion of the Archbishop John of Jenzenstein, the successor of Oczko, the canonries at St. Giles's being at the disposal of the archbishop. Soon afterwards, at any rate not later than 1389, he became a canon of the Vysehrad, after which time he ceased to designate himself "Canon of St. Giles." In September, 1389, the archbishop constituted him *GENERAL-VICAR IN SPIRITUALIBUS* of the archdiocese of Prague, an office which he retained until his death. It is manifest that he could not conveniently hold this office along with the rectory of St. Gallus, which he therefore exchanged with Linhart, Archdeacon of Saaz, for his archdeaconry, which carried with it a

canonry in the Cathedral of Prague. He retained his canonry at the Vysehrad, and on January 3, 1393, designated himself, in the "*Liber Confirmationum*," v. g. x. "*Johannes Pomuk, decretorum doctor, Archidiaconus Zacensis in ecclesia Pragensi, Canonicus Ecclesiæ Vysegradensis, Vicarius Reverendissimi in Christo Patris et domini, Domini Johannis, Sanctæ Pragensis Ecclesiæ Archiepiscopi, apostolicæ sedis Legati secundi, in Spiritualibus Generalis.*" In the "*Acta Judiciaria*" of 1392 he is not described as "*Canonicus Ecclesiæ Vysegradensis*," but as "*Canonicus Ecclesiæ sancti Petri prope Pragam*," which appears to be only another way of describing the same dignity.

This is all that is known of John of Pomuk until we come to the cause and circumstances of his violent death. The "*Libri Erectionum*," or "*Books of Foundations*," the "*Libri Confirmationum*," or "*Books of Confirmations*" to incumbencies, &c., and the "*Acta Judiciaria*," testify abundantly to his activity as a man of business as general-vicar from 1390 to 1393. But, in order to understand the dispute between King Wenceslas IV. and the Archbishop John of Jenstein, which resulted so unfortunately for all parties, we must go back to earlier matters.

JOHN of JENSTEIN (or JENZENSTEIN) was, while yet a boy, destined for holy orders, and soon received SEVEN benefices, the revenues of which enabled him to live in a very expensive manner. In 1379 he became Bishop of Meissen, but continued to love the woods and forests better than the services of the church. At the early age of twenty-eight he was promoted to the Archbishopric of Prague, with which he united the Lord Chancellorship of Bohemia. A terrible fever

threw him on the bed of repentance, and the shocking death of the Bishop of Magdeburg, who perished in the attempt to escape on an outcry of fire being raised from a ball-room, in which he had been dancing in secular attire with ladies of rank, added keenness and permanency to his penitence. Henceforth he gave himself up to ascetic practices, but spiritual pride appears to have taken the place of worldly pleasure in his heart, and he was ready to use the weapons of excommunication and interdict on very trifling and purely secular provocations.

In 1383 the king and the archbishop appear to have been at peace, but in 1384 a quarrel broke out between them on a very undignified occasion. One of the king's favourites, John Czuch of Zasada, had constructed a weir in the Elbe on his property at Lobkovitz, close to the bounds of the archbishop's possessions. The archbishop's officials protested in vain, and in the summer of 1384 attacked the work *vi et armis* and destroyed it. At this taking of the law into their own hands King Wenceslas flew into a violent rage, summoned the archbishop to Karlstein, kept him under arrest for several days, and deprived him of the lord chancellorship of the kingdom. More or less irritation appears to have henceforth subsisted between the king and the archbishop as to the limits of their respective jurisdictions without coming to any serious outbreak, till 1393. Then the archbishop, without previously communicating with the king, excommunicated the king's under-chamberlain,¹ Sigmund

¹ In Poland, as well as Bohemia, the post of Under-chamberlain (*Podkomorzy*) was one of the highest in the land.

Huler, who appears to have imprisoned several clerical students at Prague, and even executed one or two of them for reasons which have not come down to us. Huler had also restored certain baptized Jews to their relatives, and expressed himself with regard to the Jewish religion in a manner highly unsatisfactory to the archbishop, but we have no further means of forming a judgment as to the real merits or demerits of the parties.

A more serious event succeeded. Wenceslas was contemplating the erection of a new episcopal see in the southwest of his kingdom, for the benefit of a titular-patriarch, or one of three titular-bishops, who enjoyed his favour, and was waiting for the death of Raczek, the old Abbot of Kladrau, to establish a cathedral instead of the Benedictine abbey in that place. That this would have been a great public benefit there can be no doubt, the archdiocese of Prague being of enormous and unwieldy dimensions, extending not only over all Bohemia, with the exception of the districts of Leitomysl and Schluckenau, but also including the counties of Glatz, Zittau, and Pirna, beyond the present limits of Bohemia. The little notice taken subsequently of the archbishop's complaints at Rome makes it probable that the king had a certain understanding with the pope on the subject, although he undoubtedly had none with the archbishop. However, the abbot was scarcely dead when the monks proceeded with their election of a successor, Olenus, and the vicar of the archbishop with his confirmation of their choice, so rapidly, or perhaps so secretly, contrary to the express commands

of the king, that the latter appears to have received intelligence of both events at one and the self-same time. An attempt at reconciliation was made by the king's councillors, and on March 20th a meeting between the king and the archbishop was arranged at Prague. The only authority for the details of what then happened is the archbishop's longer letter of complaint to the pope, a great portion of which, containing various grievances, which will exhibit the relations between the king and the archbishop, I shall now proceed to translate. The shorter plaint of the archbishop is remarkable for its omissions rather than for any light that it throws upon the dispute. Pelzel gives the longer only, Pubitschka both.

In Art. xvii. the archbishop complains of the conduct of Czuch respecting the weir, which was still kept up.

In Art. xviii. he complains of interruptions to the free navigation of the river from the town of Raudnitz, caused by the citizens of Leitmeritz, whom he excommunicated, but they received the support of the king.

In Art. xx. he complains of loss of revenue from part of the Moldau, which belonged to the church, and in Art. xxiv. of great losses, expenses, and difficulties in obtaining money for the produce of his property.

Art. xxv. runs :—

“Likewise firstly that, when for the sake of executing justice I summoned Sigismund, the under chamberlain of the kingdom of Bohemia, by my officials to answer respecting words said and deeds done by him that were enormous and heretical, and contrary to the faith, he did not appear, but contumaciously said that he would appear with 200 lances. And when for contumacy, and likewise because a year before he had beheaded a certain clerical student, and this, though late, had become known

to me, and likewise because he had again imprisoned another cleric in the new town of Prague, and refused to deliver him over to my prison, but afterwards burned him enormously, and when I had commanded him to be excommunicated according to the canon '*Si quis suadente*,' he so inflamed the king and Procop, Margrave of Moravia, and others of the council, the accomplices of these misdemeanours, that the king entertained the greatest wrath against me and my officials and vicars, and very many others of my people."

Art. xxvi. — "Likewise, when it was noised abroad how greatly the king was incensed, and desired in various ways to disturb both my vicars and the rest, my official (*Puchnik*) and vicar (*Pomuk*) NOW A HOLY MARTYR, retired in fear to the Castle of Raudnitz, where I then was, and at length several of the king's council sent for me to come to Prague. I, foreseeing the anger of the king, and fearing that some evil would come of it, piously deferred going, but went at the persuasion of my official, my vicar, and my steward, and others to a certain place and town one mile from Prague, where the king's council, *i. e.* Electus Laurentinus, the king's confessor, and the king's marshal, met me for the purpose of making peace and soothing the king's anger. They ate and drank with me, and, enticing me by soft words, pledged their faith, as well as the king's steward, that I could safely go on to Prague with my people, saying that, though the king was very angry, yet will he gladly see thee, the archbishop, and will treat of concord, and at length peace will be made between the king, the margrave, and the under chamberlain, and thee and thine. Nevertheless, they privately gave me letters from the king, in which the king wrote to me in the vulgar German thus in the same letter: 'Thou, archbishop, give me back my Castle of Raudnitz and other castles of mine, and depart from my land of Bohemia. And if thou shalt attempt aught against me or mine I will drown thee and put an end to the quarrel. Come to Prague.'"

Art. xxvii.—"Likewise on the next day a limit of time was set for me, wherein to treat of concord and peace with the king, the Margrave of Moravia, and the king's under chamberlain—

to which consultation I sent my councillors, who, on that day, and the next day, concluded an arrangement with the king and the under chamberlain, but not with the margrave, of an arrangement with whom they were yet to treat. At length I was conducted to the king along with them, he being near my episcopal house, *i. e.*, near the church of St. Mary the Virgin, at the foot of the bridge, for the purpose of making final peace. But when I was there, with my vicars and others, he annulled and made void all that treaty, which he had himself commissioned his council to make, saying that he would not be satisfied with that treaty and agreement, and added—not to mention many blasphemous and angry words and threats—these words, saying: ‘Thou, archbishop! thou excommunicatest my officers without my knowledge, and hast confirmed the Abbot of Cladrub. Likewise, because thou accusest my under-chamberlain of heresy and errors, making mention of the Jews, whereas the Jews belong to me and this thing concerns me, and thou doest these things without counsel and of thine own head, know that thou and thine shall mourn.’ And, after many other threatening words, he said to my steward, ‘Depart from me, or I will have thy head cut off.’ At length, seeing my officials and the dignitaries (*prelatos*) who were with me, he said to them, ‘Take for me those four’—*i. e.*, NICHOLAS PUCHNIK, my official, and JOHN, doctor of laws, my vicar, WENCESLAS, provost of Meissen, and MYSELF—‘and conduct them carefully;’ and, with other threats he assailed me, and said: ‘Thee and thee will I drown’—pointing out individuals—‘and I will that ye presently go up to the chapter-house, FOR THERE WILL I SEE BY WHOSE ADVICE THIS HATH BEEN DONE.’ And when I bent my knees several times before him, he likewise bent both his knees, mockingly, opposite me; and then, arising, ordered them to be conducted to the chapter-house, and then to the prætorium or the judge. And when he was there in the chapter-house, he smote BOHUSLAUS, doctor of law, dean of the Church of Prague, an aged and infirm man, several times with the hilt of his sword, even to a great effusion of blood, and ordered them to be led, with their hands tied behind their backs, from their house to the house of

the Burg-grave of Prague; so also the rest, with Dom. Nycpso, my steward, a knight advanced in years, he ordered to be conducted to the prætorium and house of the judge, whither I also was conducted with them;¹ and when it became late in the evening, the hands and feet of all of them being tied, he caused them all to be maltreated (*trucidari*) by his torturer in his own presence, and himself alone applied his hand and fire to the sides of the vicar and official, and to other parts, sparing only the old man, the Provost of Meissen, and the knight, whom he kept in arrest in another place, AND THEY WOULD ALL HAVE BEEN DROWNED, had not the public notaries, in his presence, promised and sworn that they would never then or afterwards say that they had been under arrest or tortured (*martyrizatos*); and, as has become known to me, that they would also swear, that they would take part against me, the bishop; and they, panic-stricken with fear, rather than be drowned, ordered a public instrument to be drawn up, and, as is said, bound themselves by their own oaths, and thus were released. Only the venerable JOHN, doctor, and my vicar in spiritual matters, BECAUSE HE COULD IN NO WISE HAVE LIVED ANY LONGER, was publicly taken to be drowned, through the streets and squares of the city, with his hands bound behind his back, and a piece of wood holding his mouth open, and with his feet tied to his head like a wheel, and was thrown from the bridge of Prague, at about the third hour of the night, and drowned."

In Art. xxix. we find the archbishop playing the hypocrite and practising an amount of mental reserve towards the king's councillors, which is by no means calculated to raise his character in the eyes of honest men. He says:—

"And thus they took my hand, which I did not refuse, and the said underchamberlain begged me to pardon him. I said to him, 'I do pardon thee for all that thou hast done to me,'

¹ The exact mode of the archbishop's escape does not appear.

suppressing this, 'for all that thou hast transgressed against God, when the time of action arrives, I will in no wise leave unpunished in thee.' For the articles touching heresy affect me more than all the rest."

In Art. xxxi. he describes his interview with Weniceslas :—

"Likewise on the morrow I went to the king to complete a final agreement. I was therefore persuaded to bow before him and ask him to pardon me for whatever I had done against him. This humiliation I did not refuse to perform, and on going to him begged him to pardon me for whatever I had done against him. He answered, that I should not have excommunicated his officers without his knowledge. Neither did the king perform any corresponding act of humiliation, or give any satisfaction for the evils he had committed."

In Art. xxxv. the matter of the Abbot of Kladrau comes on the tapis again.

"And when I had been in Prague to exhibit to the people, as usual, the imperial and royal relics, I intended to ride again to my castle of Raudnitz. But when I was still at dinner, it was intimated to me on behalf of Electus Laurentinus and the king's underchamberlain himself, not to go any whither till I had heard the king's deputation. I was much disturbed, knowing that, as usual, they would have no good news for me, but would require things impossible and unbecoming, and waited a long time. At length they came and told me that the king had given his consent to the alienation of the aforesaid estates of the Church in Moravia. Likewise the Church desires and wishes, that thou, lord archbishop, and thy chapter, should use thy endeavours for the Abbey of Kladrau to be erected into a bishopric, and that thou shouldest write thy letter to the pope, that he may do so. I said I wished to speak with the chapter concerning this which also I did. They rose early in the morning, and calling the canons together, agreed that they would do the will of the

king, and told me to write to the pope and give my consent to the said erection. I said to them, 'And how can I do this with honour, when the same abbot has been lawfully elected and I have justly confirmed him? It would not, therefore, be honourable for me to do this.' They answered, saying, that, the lord abbot ought to resign the said abbacy into the king's hands; which, nevertheless, was not true, since the abbot was living (*in viâ*) as well as myself, and knew nought concerning the premises.'"

This is the entire contemporary evidence respecting John of Pomuk's cruel death, and I ask the reader to judge for himself, whether there is any token of reserve or suppression of a further and secret reason in it? The anger of the king does not seem to have been at the outset more violent against John of Pomuk than against Nicholas Puchnik; neither does it appear that the king would eventually have put the former to death any more than the latter, had it not been that, as the archbishop says, it was manifest, that "he could in no wise have lived any longer" after his cruel usage. It may have been from mere casualty, that he was more severely injured than Puchnik, but we shall ere long find reason to think, that it was owing to a certain freedom of speech which he used towards the king, who was so grossly forgetting his royal dignity.

That there were two sides to the question between the king and the archbishop, and that the king was not considered as intentionally and deliberately assailing the rights of the Church, but simply as disgracing himself by conduct unbecoming to a king of the Romans, will appear from several considerations. In the first place, the archbishop's own chapter, as above admitted, did not coincide in his views, and in the

next place John of Jenstein failed entirely in obtaining the support and countenance of Pope Boniface IX., to whom he fled with the new Abbot of Kladrau, and who was and continued to be on excellent terms with King Wenceslas, and in fact was under considerable obligations to him. Indeed, Professor Reimann suggests, that the entire omission of the question of the Abbacy of Kladrau in the archbishop's shorter complaint is due to his finding his position in that respect untenable. The dissimulation with which the Archbishop conducted his subsequent negotiations with the King, is severely remarked upon by Palacky (vol. iii. p. 64), but a good deal there taken into consideration belongs rather to the history of John of Jenstein, than to that of John of Pomuk.

Thirdly. The passage of the sentence of deposition pronounced against Wenceslas by the Archbishop of Maintz in the name of the Electors, on Aug. 20, 1400, referring to the affair of John of Pomuk, runs as follows:—

“He hath also, a terrible and inhuman thing, with his own hand, and that beyond measure, and the hands of other evil-doers, whom he had with him, tortured people, and hath murdered, drowned, burned with torches, and inhumanly put to death, contrary to law, honourable prelates, parsons, and spiritual persons, a thing which is unbecoming to a king of the Romans.”

If there had been any idea that there was a further and secret reason for the death of John of Pomuk, and that he was really murdered for refusing to violate the seal of confession, would it not have been noticed by a spiritual Elector like the Archbishop of Maintz?

There is also a singular passage in the evidence given against John Huss (Palacky, "Documenta," p. 165), which goes to strengthen my view, that the matter was not generally considered a dispute between the king and the Church, but a personal quarrel between the king and the archbishop. It runs as follows:—

"Likewise it is set down, that in the house of Wenceslas the pitch-merchant, immediately after dinner, in the presence of a certain master and a presbyter and some laymen, when mention had been made of the drowning of D. John, of pious memory, and the imprisonment of Puchnik and the dean of Prague; and it had been said that an interdict ought to have been issued, the said M. John Huss was not ashamed to say scandalously: 'A mighty thing, that those parsons (*popones*, Germ. *Pfaffen*) are imprisoned! Tell me a reason why the service of God should be discontinued?' "

To this Huss replied—

"'Protiwa has kept that saying a long time, but has added a falsehood to it.' I said, that there is no reason in Christ's Scripture, that, on account of myself, or any other parson, if I were imprisoned or put to death, people should cease from praising God throughout the whole kingdom. 'Tell me a Scripture or a reason,' said I to Protiwa; and I think he has not, up to the present day, found a reason in the law of Christ, why people ought to cease from divine service on account of the imprisonment of a priest."

We must bear in mind also here, that John Huss was undoubtedly the spiritual director of Queen Sophia, Wenceslas's second wife, and that had John of Pomuk been his predecessor, some allusion to the circumstance might have been expected in the conversation.

In 1401, EIGHT years after the death of John of Pomuk, John of Jenstein's chaplain wrote the life of his patron, in which he mentions the affair of Pomuk in the following terms :—

“ And the Venerable John, then vicar in spiritualities, by the grace of God became a martyr, in that, after having been burned and stamped upon, he was finally drowned, and the place where his body lay was indicated by remarkable miracles (*clarescentibus miraculis ostensus*), but, because this is recent and known to the whole country, and because these things, I believe, are more fully recorded elsewhere, they are not inserted here.”

Allusion is here apparently made to the archbishop's letter of plaint above cited, and it is incredible that, if the archbishop's biographer had known of any *further* reason, especially such a thing as the refusal to violate the seal of the Queen's confession, he should have thus refrained from mentioning it.

Dr. F. Palacky discovered in the Library of S. Mark, at Venice (“*Italienische Reise*,” p. 97), a “*Tractatus de longævo schismate*,” written between the years 1420 and 1422, which goes very freely and fully into King Wenceslas's delinquencies. Cap. xix. runs :—

“ Amongst other things, that honourable man, acceptable to God and to men, whether Germans or Bohemians, John, a presbyter, vicar of the Archbishop of Prague in spiritualities, doctor of canon law, after having been cruelly crushed, burned, and eviscerated; he drowned in the water: Nicholas Botnig, a licentiate in canon law and master of arts, official of the Archbishop of Prague, a presbyter, after having been piteously maltreated with flame and fire by his own royal hand, so to speak, and the hands of others, even in his secret parts, he released scarce half-alive; Boleslas, the ordinary Reader of Prague, doctor of canon law and Dean of Prague, after being arrested and beaten, and likewise the Provost of Meissen, a venerable

man named Knobeloch, after being stretched out, stripped and already offered to torture, he scarcely allowed to go free. In those days there was no one to do justice on the king's behalf towards orphans and widows, nay, not even to barons, knights, or vassals, no small part of whom have uttered complaints of royal violence inflicted upon them. He was therefore hated by both clergy and people, townsmen and countrymen; to the Jews and the Jews only was he acceptable."

Does this writer show any signs of suppressing a secret out of tenderness for King Wenceslas? Is it not manifest that he not only wrote all he knew, but that he would gladly have added more, if there had been more to add?

Andrew of Ratisbon, writing about 1425, says that Wenceslas "drowned John, an excellent doctor of theology, because he said that he, who knew not how to rule realms, was unworthy of the name of king." This looks very much like an expression made use of by a high-spirited priest to the enraged king in the course of torture.

The "Series," or list of the Abbots of Kladrau, under the name of the Abbot "Albert," which appears to be a mistake for "Olenus," says: "On account of the confirmation of this Albert, John, or Johannek, Suffragan of Prague, was, by command of the king, thrown into the Moldau and drowned." That the name "Olenus" is the correct one is plain from John of Pomuk's instrument of Confirmation, dated March 10, 1393, which is printed by F. A. Tingl in his edition of the "Books of Confirmations," p. 156 (Prague, 1866).

Three Bohemian chronicles give the date 1393, but do not assign any reason for John of Pomuk's death;

neither do they add any circumstance of interest. The chronicle of *Benes of Weitmil* gives the Sunday "Judica" (v. in Lent) as the day, or, more probably the approximate day of the event.

Seven MSS. of the collection called the "Continuation of Pulkava," ranging from 1432 to 1526, say: "1393. In the same year was drowned a famous doctor, the priest Johanek, vicar of the archbishopric of Prague, under the Prague bridge, by order of King Wenceslas, because, against his will, he had confirmed the abbot of Kladrau."

ÆNEAS SYLVIVS PICCOLOMINI, afterwards Pope PIUS II., who wrote his "History of Bohemia" in 1448, makes no mention whatever of John of Pomuk's death, whence it is tolerably plain that the event was not generally, in well-informed circles, considered as of either political or religious moment, or as affecting the relations of church and state.

The "Old Register of Anniversaries," belonging to the chapter of Prague, gives March 20th as the anniversary of John of Pomuk. An old MS. in the library of the Chapter of Prague says that a person named Jenetzko gave, in 1396, to Nicholas Puchnik an annuity of seven *schock* (a *schock* is threescore) of Bohemian groschen, for the purpose of keeping up the anniversary of John of Pomuk, archdeacon of Saaz, who was drowned in 1393. And in the "Book of Foundations" we find (xiii. G. 5) that "in the year 1396, on Nov. 2, Nicholas Puchnik gave two *schock* of groschen upon the brewery of a certain *Jezovczo*, to the chapter and ministers of the church of Prague, for the soul of John Pomuk, of good memory."

An anonymous Bohemian chronicle, attributed to the year 1442, says: "In this year (1393) was drowned the famous Doctor Johanek from the bridge. In the same year there was a drought in Bohemia, in memory of this Doctor."

What Höfler calls the "Leipsic Chronicle" says: "In the year 1393 was drowned Johanko of Nepomuk, doctor of decrees, on St. Benedict's Day (March 21), in the night-time. That same year, in the summer, the river Veltava was so dried up, that in Podskal the people crossed the river dry-shod, by putting down a short pole." N.B.—Reckoning the day from sunset to sunset, March 21 is correct. There is a similar discrepancy between December 31 and January 1, as to the day of the death of Wenceslas IV.'s first wife Johanna, who is believed to have been throttled by one of his large dogs during the night.

We come now to the FIRST mention of any connexion between John of Pomuk and the Queen of Bohemia, and also of any connexion between John of Pomuk and the "seal of confession." Dr. Palacky, writing to me on March 12, 1872, says: "I must make known to you what no one knew before myself, and I found in the "*Liber Augustalis*" of Thomas Ebendorfer, of Haselbach (born 1387, died 1464), a professor and canon at Vienna, in a manuscript in the Imperial Library at Vienna, No. 3423, which is the author's autograph, hitherto unknown and still unpublished, treating of the lives of the Roman emperors. In book vi. fol. 272, he says of Wenceslas, King of the Romans and of Bohemia: "He likewise commanded John, the confessor of his wife, a master in theology, both be-

cause he said that he was worthy of the name of king who ruled well, and also, AS IS COMMONLY REPORTED (*ut fertur*), because he refused to violate the seal of confession, to be drowned in the Moldavia."¹ "This is," continues Dr. Palacky, "so far as is known to me, the earliest mention of the seal of confession, with which Haselbach, when in 1433 he spent a considerable time at Prague as an ambassador of the Council of Bâle, became acquainted from hearsay, *ut fertur*, but which he does not give himself as a fact. Still, it is manifest, hence, that the story about the seal of confession was tolerably ancient."

Karl Adolf Konstantin Höfler, in his "Life of Ruprecht von der Pfalz" (1861), p. 90, informs his readers with respect to the death of John of Pomuk, that: "Apart from the *secret motives*, which were only gradually revealed afterwards, a new cause [the excommunication of Sigmund Huler], had already arrived to inflame the royal wrath." In a foot note at the bottom of the page, he gives a portion of the above citation from Thomas of Haselbach, *i. e.*, the words "*quia sigillum confessionis violare detrectavit*," omitting the important words "*ut fertur*," and thus deliberately producing a false impression on the minds of his readers, as if the author he was citing were stating a *fact* instead of quoting a *report*. A pretty *secret* indeed to be betrayed by common report (*ut fertur*) to a German visitor at Prague, just forty years after the event, when in the meantime, King Wen-

¹ Quoted from Höfler by Novak, p. 110, in 1862, though strangely not quoted by Frind in his second edition in 1871.

ceslas's greatest enemies had preserved a religious silence on the subject. But Archbishop John of Jenstein's own complaint to the Pope, gives us a possible and not improbable clue to the alleged violation of the seal of confession in the king's declaration, that in the chapterhouse he intended to "see by whose counsel this had been done," "*ibi videbo de quorum consilio hoc est actum.*" It is perfectly possible that the "seal of confession" may have been pleaded with regard to some of the questions asked of John of Pomuk under torture, but it is also absolutely certain that no stress was laid upon any violation of the "seal of confession" at the moment or for a considerable time afterwards. When King Wenceslas's memory became a butt for scoff and reviling among the Catholics, the smallest foundation was enough for people to mount upon to cast another stone at him.

But there are two things to be especially noted in Haselbach's evidence: (1) that he is inaccurate in calling John of Pomuk, a *Master of Theology*, instead of a *Doctor of canon law*; (2,) that he distinctly separates what he believed to be a fact, viz., that John of Pomuk was Confessor of Wenceslas's wife, from what he gives as a mere current report, viz., that he refused to violate the seal of confession, by placing between them the words, through which the General-Vicar is said to have specially excited the king's anger, which words are also in effect given by Andrew of Ratisbon.

A question now arises as to which of King Wenceslas's two wives, Queen Johanna or Queen Sophia, if either, had John of Pomuk for her spiritual director?

Pomuk was undoubtedly a creature of Archbishop John of Jenstein, and it would seem highly unlikely, that in the midst of his quarrel with the Archbishop Wenceslas should have permitted his young and newly married wife—he married her in 1389—to have taken as her confessor so decided a partizan of his personal enemy. On the other hand, during most of Queen Johanna's lifetime (ob. 1386), Wenceslas was on excellent terms with the archbishop, and the queen's confessor would naturally have been selected on his recommendation. In Queen Sophia's time too, John of Pomuk's occupations were rather those of a lawyer than of a priest. Against these reasons we have to set the inconsistent character of Wenceslas, which frequently betrayed him into the most unlikely and contradictory proceedings. But certain it is, that the good understanding between Wenceslas and Sophia was not interrupted by John of Pomuk's violent death, whereas, had he been her confessor, and that a beloved confessor, she would scarcely have submitted tamely to such conduct on the part of her husband.

We come now to the person, who, till Palacky's discovery of Thomas of Haselbach's "*Liber Augustalis*" was, for the space of above ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY years (1393-1541), the sole known authority for the violent death of the queen's confessor on account of his alleged refusal to divulge her confession to King Wenceslas. PAUL ZIDEK in his "*SPRAVOVNA*," or "*Instruction-book*," a work written in 1471, partly to terrify King George of Bohemia out of Utraquism into Catholicism, and partly to induce the king to put

its author into a better pecuniary position, says, amongst other matters true and false, for which King Wenceslas is held up to reprobation: "As the king did not trust his wife, and she went to confession to Magister Johannek, Dean of All Saints, Wenceslas came to him to inquire *with whom his wife held unlawful intercourse*. And as the dean refused to tell him, he caused him to be drowned. Thereupon the river dried up, and as the people could not use their mills and had no bread, they began to murmur, and this was the beginning of evil."

Here King Wenceslas is represented as an injured husband, or at any rate a husband believing himself injured, while poor Queen Sophia is coarsely hinted at as an adúlteress, screened by her confessor under the sacredness of the "seal of confession." King Wenceslas suspects his wife and wants to know, not whether his suspicions are correct or not, but actually the names of the paramours with whom his wife holds unlawful intercourse. No one but Paul Zidek has cast a slur upon the fair fame of Queen Sophia, even though she was a favourer of John Huss and more than suspected of influencing her husband in favour of his adherents. And it is very manifest, that this, the earliest form of the legend, and the only piece of evidence known to those who procured the canonization of the saint of even decently early date, tends as little to the glorification of the queen as that of the king, and that it involves the very point, that of the concealment of actual crime, in which the confessional has always been looked upon with suspicion.

Zidek states that Magister Johannek was Dean of

All Saints. Well-known documents exhibit Blasius Lupus as Dean of All Saints in Feb. 1393, and also in the year 1406. And John of Pomuk is traced from office to office so clearly and circumstantially, that it is in the highest degree improbable, though not absolutely impossible, that he was ever dean of All Saints at all. Zidek is also in error in terming him "Magister," as is also Thomas of Haselbach. John of Pomuk regularly signs himself "Doctor decretorum," *i. e.*, "Doctor of canon law," and was neither a "Master of theology" nor a "Master of arts," although it would seem that later, in common parlance, when he was measured, as the Catholic, with John Huss, the Utraquist martyr, it was but setting one "Magister John" against another. We learn from Tomek's "History of the University of Prague," that the degree of "Magister" was the highest in arts and theology, while that of Doctor was usual in law and medicine. Zidek must therefore, in all probability, stand convicted at the outset of two blunders, which cast a certain amount of suspicion upon the remainder of his statement. Let us now see whether his general character is such as to add weight to his evidence or to the suspicion already attaching to it. His life is given at considerable length by the late KAREL JAROMÍR ERBEN, Archivarius of the old town of Prague, in his "Vybor Literatury Czeské," part ii. pp. 743, 744, which I have translated below, with unimportant omissions.

"PAUL ZIDEK, also termed 'Magister Paul of Prague' and 'Paulirinus,' was born at Prague, in 1413, of Jewish parents, kidnapped in his childhood and brought up as an Utraquist. From Prague he went to the University of Vienna, where he

quitted the Utraquist for the Roman communion, in order to take the degree of doctor of philosophy. Thence, after some years, he went to Italy, where he studied medicine and took the degree of doctor at Padua and Bologna. He was afterwards ordained priest by the Archbishop of Regensburg, and after the cessation of the Hussite wars returned to Prague, where, in 1442, he took the degree of 'master,' but was twice punished for various insults to his colleagues. Receiving a canonry in the Cathedral of St. Vitus from Pope Eugenius IV. and entertaining hopes of the bishopric of Leitmeritz, which, however, were disappointed, he vigorously supported the Roman side, till, in 1448, with other Catholic 'masters,' he was compelled to leave Prague. For some time he stayed at Cracow, but quitted it for fear of the plague for Breslau, where, just at that time, the monk John Capistran was distinguishing himself by his zeal against the Bohemian heretics. Zidek, wishing to make friends with Rokycana, the Utraquist archbishop elect, and other leading Utraquists, in order to be able to return to Prague, wrote to them how Capistran was speaking against Huss and Rokycana, advising them to send some 'masters' to inquire into what was going on, and promising to provide their maintenance while they were there. But the messenger, after taking the payment and promising to convey the letter to Prague, laid it before the town-council of Breslau, which gave information to the bishop and to Capistran. Zidek was put in prison, but released at the intercession of George of Podiebrad, then Regent of the Kingdom of Bohemia; he was, however, obliged publicly to acknowledge his error, and on May 18, 1453, to renounce the Hussite heresy by oath before Capistran. But a penance being imposed upon him, rather than undergo it, he escaped to Prague and cringed to Rokycana, in order that his canonry and other sequestered revenues might be restored to him. He afterwards returned to Cracow, where he insulted Capistran (Jan., 1454), was again imprisoned as a heretic, and was with difficulty released through the intercession of powerful persons with the pope. From that time he lived at Prague about the court of King George in poverty, squalor and general

contempt. His rudeness, vain-gloriousness, insolent plainness of speech, cringingness, and withal unconscientiousness in the choice of means, prevented him from acquiring and preserving regard. Latin learning was his highest admiration, and therefore he objected to the use of the Bohemian language in churches instead of the Latin. Remembering his origin, he opined, that 'the Jews ought to be highly esteemed, so long as they produced distinguished persons like himself.' He died, apparently, soon after the death of King George. Besides an encyclopædia in Latin¹ (*Liber viginti artium*), he wrote, at the command of King George, a 'Book of Instruction' (*Spravovna*) to the King' and 'Chronicles.' In the 'Book of Instruction' he desires the king to quit the party of Rokycana and submit to the pope and the emperor, and in his 'Chronicles' similarly recounts instances of good and bad rulers, in doing which *he undoubtedly gave himself no concern about truth and historical fidelity*. As the highest ideal of a perfect ruler, he depicted the emperor, Charles IV., and in opposition to him, as the very abomination of mankind, his son, Wenceslas IV., both with equal injustice. His notions about these two monarchs were in later times purposely circulated as the truth, and still possess that credit to a certain extent. He also wrote a treatise in Bohemian, addressed to the Town-council of Prague, and a number of fables (probably in Latin), which are now lost."

Palacky, in his "History of Bohemia," vol. iii. p. 67, note 75, tells us, that "demonstrably false accusations are brought by Magister Paul Zidek in abundance against King Wenceslas."

Such is the sole witness, besides the "report," the existence, but not the authenticity of which is vouched for by Thomas of Haselbach, during no less than 148

¹ This was highly esteemed in Poland, and ascribed to the Polish "Michael Scott," Pan Twardowsky. Palacky iv. 1, 432.

years, for the circumstances, on account of which St. John Nepomucen was first canonized and then taken by the Jesuits as their second patron!!!

We must now pass on. Seven MSS. of the collection of chronicles commonly called the "Continuation of Pulkava," contain the account above quoted of the death of John of Pomuk because of the confirmation of the abbot of Kladrau. The four earliest of these, A, C, D, E, which are all of the 15th century, do not contain, while the three latest, F, G, H, which belong to the first twenty-five years of the 16th century,¹ or thereabouts, do contain a remarkable addition, which shows that under the Catholic Jagellon dynasty a certain amount of reverence had begun to be paid to the grave of the future saint. These MSS. add to the statement of the others: "And he is buried in the castle of Prague, in the church of St. Wenceslas, where his name is cut in a stone, and there is a cross on the same stone. On which, up to the present day, no one willingly steps with his feet."

This, with other considerations, led Otto Abel to the conclusion, that the railing-in of the grave of John of Pomuk did not take place till after 1526, the date of the accession of the Hapsburg dynasty, and probably not till 1530. But Canonicus Frind showed me a Latin document written between 1420 and 1450, containing these words: "Likewise on the vigil of Benedict takes place the anniversary of Johanko Pomuk, whom King Venceslaus commanded to drown The 'commenda' is performed before the altar of Saint

¹ Palacky's "Würdigung," pp. 252-259.

Clement, where lies the marble stone, on which is engraved 'Johannes Pomuk.'" A later hand, which Frind, who is corroborated by Professor Tomek, considers of the last half of the same century, *i. e.*, belonging to the age of the Jagellon dynasty, which commenced in 1471, adds: "Where now is the iron railing in the passage round"—"*ubi nunc est cancellum ferreum in circuitu?*" As the "Continuation of Pul-kava" implies that there was no difficulty in stepping on the grave, we must suppose that this was a low and insignificant railing, or even perhaps one that did not entirely surround the place, which was perhaps replaced by a higher and stronger one in 1530. Another was afterwards added, as some say, in 1598, as others, in 1626, whatever there was previously having been swept away in 1619. It is difficult, if not impossible, to get at the exact history of these sets of railings, but certain it is that the "Acta" of the canonization speak, and that repeatedly, of two and two only, which were then well known and in existence. Both had, subsequently to the canonization, to make way for the present colossal silver monument.

We now come to the writer, to whom the credit or discredit of the dualization of the saint belongs, and who first separated the legendary confessor of the queen, and protomartyr of the sacrament of penitence from the historical vicar-general. WENCESLAS HAJEK, of Liboczan, who, in 1541, published his "Kronika Czeska," "Bohemian Chronicle," which he had taken six years in composing, but which is universally allowed to be as full of fiction and falsehood as a chronicle can be, and to be utterly useless for histori-

cal purposes, after stating how Wenceslas's excellent queen had urged him to amend his evil life, and had thus drawn upon herself his violent hatred, gives, under the year 1383, the following story :

“The morning after the feast of St. Sigismund (May 3), Wenceslas summoned before him the priest, John of Nepomuk, a God-fearing man, who was a magister in the University of Prague, a canon, and the queen's confessor, and importunately urged him to tell him what sins the queen had confessed. The priest hereupon replied : ‘My lord king, I know it not, and if I did know, it would not become me to impart it to you, any more than it becomes you to ask me about it.’ The king, inflamed with wrath, caused him to be thrown into a subterranean dungeon and laid on the rack by the executioner, whom he was wont to call his gossip ; but when he could not extort anything from him, he commanded him to be conveyed in the night to the bridge of Prague and thrown bound into the water. Thereupon, in the same and the following night, many burning lights were seen over the body of the drowned man. But the dignified clergy of Prague drew the body out of the water near the Convent of the Holy Cross, and buried it in the Church of St. Vitus, and placed a stone to cover it. Since then many and various miracles have taken place there, and therefore many have named him a martyr of God, and a saint. But if any body attacked his sanctity and mischievously trod on the cross cut in the stone, that person on the selfsame day experienced scorn and shame, and therefore the spiritual dignitaries have caused the grave to be surrounded with an iron railing.”

Under the year 1393 we find a story bearing greater resemblance to what we have already read from documents of undoubted authenticity, but still diverging quite enough from fact to throw great discredit on the chronicler. Hajek's words are as follows :

“The same year, the day after the feast of Corpus Christi,

King Wenceslas summoned before him the archbishop's suffragan, whose name was Doctor Johanek, and asked him why he had ventured to act thus, and confirm the monk Albert as abbot of Kladrau. The suffragan answered: 'Gracious king, I did this because all the brethren of the abbey elected him as their abbot, and my predecessors likewise confirmed his predecessors in the selfsame manner.' The king, hearing his very proper defence, commanded him to be seized, and that same night caused him to be conveyed to the bridge at Prague, thrown into the water, and drowned.

"On hearing this the archbishop sent two canons of the cathedral of Prague to the king, to inquire of him for what causes he had commanded this to be done to him. When they came to him, they inquired of him, and said: 'O king, our gracious lord, we make known to your grace, that we are sent by the archbishop, your chaplain, to inquire what that good man, Johanek, the doctor and suffragan, has done, that he has received the end of his life through the executioner?' The king answered: 'Since ye praise him after his death, and say that he was a good man, I will that others shall likewise praise you after your death;' and commanded them to be immediately arrested, and without delay sent for his gossip, the executioner, intending to command him to do to them as he had done to Doctor Johanek. But at the intercession of some of his courtiers, he commanded them to be released until the morrow. When then they came out of prison, they saw the executioner standing with cords ready, whereat they were no little terrified. They also saw the king standing on a balcony, and one of the canons, named Jaroslaw of Kleinstein, who was undoubtedly a pious and holy man, did reverence and said: 'O king, our lord, we your chaplains thank you for the imprisonment in which we have been, without guilt of ours; and because we two have been thus imprisoned, you shall be twice imprisoned, once this year and again next year, and because you have held our persons in that prison forty hours, you shall be held in grievous imprisonment forty weeks, and if the Lord God doth not hold his hands over you, you will receive the end

of your life in that prison.' The king smiled and said: 'You say well; go, however, and praise the Lord God that you have not taken your last draught in the river.'

Of Hajek Palacky says ("Hist. Bohem." iii. p. 67): "Towards no one has the generally unconscientious Hajek behaved so shamefully as towards King Wenceslas; it may be accepted as an infallible rule, that everything in the history of Wenceslas, that has no earlier authority than Hajek, is a pure invention and falsehood."¹ Nor does K. J. Erben speak differently in the brief account of Hajek prefixed to the extracts in his "Vybor."

But how did Hajek come to make this terrible blunder, dividing the historical John of Pomuk into two persons, separated in their deaths by an interval of TEN years, an impossible martyr of the seal of confession in 1383, and the real victim of the confirmation of the abbot of Kladrau in 1393? Apparently owing to two short notices jotted down by JOHN OF KRUMLOW, dean of Prague between 1470 and 1487, to the following effect: "Johanko of Pomuk was drowned from the bridge in MCCCLXXXIII." and "MCCCLXXXIII. Johannes of Pomuk, doctor of canon law, was drowned from the bridge." These clerical errors of the dean, in twice writing an x too few, were quite enough for Hajek to build up an imaginary John of Nepomuk, martyred in 1383, in addition to the his-

¹ In his pamphlet, "Zur Böhmischen Geschichtschreibung," Prague, 1871, Palacky calls him, p. 3, "Der ärgste Schädiger seiner Geschichte," "the worst injurer of its (Bohemia's) history."

torical personage put to death in 1393.¹ Hajek's account was adopted by DUBRAVIUS, bishop of Olmütz, in his Latin "History of Bohemia," which was printed in 1552, and all subsequent writers—except the Utraquists Lupacius and Adam of Weleslawin, who ignore the legendary queen's confessor, and mention only the historical general-vicar—have simply copied from one of these two. Indeed, Hajek's Bohemian style is so exquisite, that it is scarcely to be wondered at that uncritical readers should have taken their history from it, just as many English people take their ideas of Richard III. from Shakespeare.

Great stress is laid by the supporters of the authenticity of the legend of the queen's confessor upon a so-called *Town Chronicle* of ZITTAU in Lusatia, which is coolly ascribed to the second half of the fifteenth century, and which gives the year 1383 as the date of the martyr's death. But this very blunder, the mention of the iron lattice as *preventing* people from treading on his grave, and the peculiar terms in which Bohemia, of which Lusatia, till 1638, was a dependency, is spoken of, show that the chronicle must have been of later, and probably of very much later, date than Hajek. Neither the original, which Berghauer states to have been in German, nor the copy, which he says was made for Godfray Herbst, dean of Prague, in 1716, is now to be found; and there is nothing in existence but Berghauer's Latin translation (ii. 18) of

¹ How this naughty Hajek led those simple lambs, the Jesuits, the pope, and the Roman Curia to adopt and endorse his blunder, will be apparent afterwards.

the extract relating to John of Pomuk. Valueless as it is, I give it:

“ In the year 1383 the chaplain was drowned. That year there was a king in the realm of Bohemia, who had a wife, who went to her chaplain as confessor, a devout and religious priest, named *John of Neponitz*, and as the queen had frequently confessed to this her confessor, she was looked upon evilly by the king on that account, so that the king wished to know from the confessor, what manner of things the queen had confessed, and when the confessor frequently refused the king this, the king commanded him to be thrown into the water called Moldava, and thus he was drowned in such manner, that no one knew whither he was carried, but afterwards fishermen found him in the water, and he was buried in the metropolitan church of St. Vitus, near the high altar, in the passage round. This John of Neponicz, by divine virtue, works great miracles, and his sepulchre is surrounded with an iron lattice, that no one may easily tread upon his tomb, which is opposite the citadel.”

The only thing requiring notice here is, that the finding of the body is ascribed to common fishermen, and not to any miraculous light or other extraordinary phenomenon.

During the 16th century we find mention of John of Pomuk or Nepomuk only in historical works; it was not till the commencement of the 17th, in 1602, that he is spoken of in religious or quasi-religious writings. The merit or demerit of bringing him forward as a saint belongs to George Barthold of Braitenberg, commonly called PONTANUS from his birthplace Brüx. In the above named year this person, who was provost of the Cathedral of Prague, published a volume of Latin hymns, addressed to the Virgin Mary and the patron saints of Bohemia, in the third book of

which an ode is dedicated to John of Nepomuk, which versifies not inelegantly the story of Hajek with the addition of various reflections relating to the value and confidential nature of the sacrament of confession. In 1608 the same writer published his "Bohemia pia," in which he again places John of Nepomuk among the patron saints of the country.

But it can scarcely be conceived, that there was but one step from the objection to tread upon the gravestone and its protection by a railing on the one hand, to the fervid addresses of Pontanus to John of Nepomuk, as one of the patron saints of Bohemia, on the other. I cannot but thus far agree with Otto Abel in thinking that, especially after he became designated a "master" in theology instead of a "doctor" of canon law, the MAGISTER JOHN of the Catholics must have been pushed forward more or less vigorously by the Catholic clergy, as a rival to the great martyr of the Utraquists, MAGISTER JOHN HUSS. Yet in his final aspect, after he had been taken in hand by the Jesuits, I think we shall find that Professor Reimann is right in looking upon him as an anti-protestant saint, the great martyr of the confessional, and not as the mere rival of the Bohemian martyr, John Huss, whose name and honour had been successfully proscribed for nearly a century before the canonization of John of Nepomuk.

But to proceed in chronological order. In 1547 Ferdinand I. succeeded in destroying the constitution and liberties of Bohemia, and in expelling the "Bohemian brethren" from their fatherland, so that their stronghold was henceforth Moravia rather than

Bohemia.¹ But in 1619 the known and proved faithlessness of Ferdinand II. caused a German prince, Frederic, the Elector Palatine, husband of Elizabeth, the daughter of our James I. and father of princes Rupert and Maurice, to be invited as king into Bohemia, when the railing around the grave of John of Pomuk was summarily ejected from its hallowed position in the Cathedral of Prague. The next year saw the fatal battle of the White Mountain, after which the "Winter King" melted away like winter snow, and his place was known no more in Bohemia. The cathedral fell again into Catholic hands, and the railings were re-established and renovated. Persecution had her perfect work, the ravages of the thirty years' war desolated Bohemia, and at its conclusion the conversion of the country to the Roman obedience was complete, and its population reduced from over four millions to less than eight hundred thousand, which is undoubtedly a great credit to the Jesuits.

On April 22nd, 1621, the Antwerp canon MIREUS dedicated to the archbishop of Prague, JOHN LOHELIUS, a short history of Bohemia, in which he triumphed over the expulsion of the Calvinists, and, following Pontanus, reckoned John of Nepomuk among the patron saints of the country. In the chapel in the cathedral, originally dedicated to SS. Erhard the confessor and Ottilia, with whom John of Jenzenstein had

¹ A most interesting history of these transactions has been written by Prof. Karel Tieftrunk in Bohemian, and published by the "Matice Czeská." See the "Academy" for July 17, 1872 (No. 52).

piously associated the Virgin Mary, to whom SS. Lucia and Clement had been added later—the very chapel, which appears to have been that of John of Pomuk's own altar-priesthood upon his ordination as priest—Lohelius, on reconsecrating the altar on July 16, 1621, left out Erhard the confessor (“*confessor*”) and substituted for him John the confessor (“*confessarius*.”)¹ In the sacristy were certain pictures of the patron saints of Bohemia, which are said to have been renovated in 1621, but certain it is, whether the paintings in general were then new or merely restored, that John of Nepomuk then made his first appearance among them, and that in the dress of a canon, with a glory round his head, and bearing a palm branch in his hand.

In 1641 appeared at Prague a little book illustrated with pictures, and repeating in inflated language details taken from Hajek, Dubravius, and Pontanus in Latin, German and Bohemian. The author was George FERUS (“Wild”) a JESUIT, who, in his dedication to Baron Francis von Steinberg, asks how long it will be before the apotheosis of John takes place? Baron Steinberg in consequence determined to convert the house at Nepomuk, in which John was said to have been born, into a church. The foundations were laid in 1643, but a Swedish bullet laid the pious baron low in 1648, and the work was continued by his widow, completed in 1660, and dedicated to—St. John the Baptist!

¹ It is a pity that the English language has but one word for the Latin *Confessor* and *Confessarius*. The Germans use “Bekenner” for the first and “Beichtvater” for the second.

This, however, was but a provisional dedication, permitted, according to the Jesuit Krüger, writing in 1669, by his Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop, because the Roman Pontiff had not yet decided the case of the claimant for canonization. However, the confessor of Wenceslas's queen was represented over the altar, and the way was thus prepared for the contemplated change.

A good deal of trouble appears now to have been taken by the clergy to push forward the "cultus" of the future saint. The Archduke Leopold William, brother of Ferdinand III., was moved to give a sum of money to cause a lamp to burn for ever over the grave of the martyr, and also to ornament a candelabrum, the foot of which had been brought from Milan in the time of Frederic Barbarossa, and was said to have belonged to Solomon's temple (!), with figures of the patron saints of Bohemia, among whom John of Nepomuk also appeared. This was placed over the grave, and the pious began to resort to the place, and even to honour it with gifts. (Tanner, "Life of Father Albert Chanowsky," 1660, p. 16.)

However, as Professor Reimann sensibly remarks, when people give, they usually wish for something in return. What office then was vacant for our saint to undertake? As shame befell all those who thoughtlessly or impertinently trampled on his grave, or who doubted his sanctity, so conversely did he now undertake the office of protector of all whose good name and character were in danger. We shall find afterwards from various sources, and especially from Berg-hauer's "Protomartyr," whether he was careful or not

in the selection of objects for the exercise of his compassionate protection. Hence Berghauer's favourite maxim:—

“ Qui times infamari,
Debes Johannem venerari.”

*“ Thou who fearest scorn and shame
Must revere Johannes' name.”*

Ferus gives us only a couple of miracles, one of which is said to have occurred in 1588. “The Voyvode Christopher Sluska placed his foot contemptuously on the grave of the holy John of Nepomuk. When he was about to mount his horse, he commenced to do so unwittingly on the right side instead of the left. The animal remained motionless, and as his carriage could not proceed any further”—(I presume, owing to the nature of the road)—“he was obliged to go on foot.” The second relates to the circumstances of the desecration of the cathedral by the Calvinists. But here the three Jesuits, Ferus, Tanner and Krüger, vary so much in their details, Caraffa diverging from all three, that we cannot very easily avoid discarding their evidence, if such it may be called, altogether. The “Acta” of the canonization quote (p. 359) a letter from Prague written early in 1620, which appears both to contain all that is really known upon the point, and also to furnish a fair foundation for common fame to build upon without restraint. The extract runs as follows:

“Two days after Christmas, on both sides, by the choir, in the part where you go to the sepulchre of the blessed Confessarius John, as well as on the other side of the sacristy, where

you go round to the holy man, every thing was fastened up with boards, poles, and keys. Respecting the cause thereof there was various and diverse conversation in general; the whole fact is concealed and suppressed. Some say, that somebody, who had rashly walked over the grave of the blessed John, had fallen down and roared like a madman; others, that some eminent person had died a sudden death by the tomb of St. Vitus; and others, that something remarkable had happened in these localities and in the neighbourhood of these saints."

Pontanus, in his "Bohemia Pia," had added the office of "Royal Almoner" to those which Hajek assigns to the holy man, and the Jesuit TANNER proceeded to give further play to the inventive powers of the human mind in this direction. Tanner tells us, that the empress, Wenceslas's wife, saw, during three successive nights, whilst praying at the window, a light appear, where the confessor had been thrown into the water, above the remnant of the dried-up river. At length, she ordered search to be made, and, of course, the holy body was found. Tanner also tells us another story, which is enlarged upon by KRUEGER with remarkable gusto. A young woman had trodden mischievously upon the grave of John of Nepomuk. As she returned homewards over the thronged bridge which unites the Kleinseite to the old and new towns of Prague, a sudden wind arose, which elevated her clothes on high, to her incredible disgrace and shame.

In spite of all this, the conditions required by a Bull of Pope Urban VIII. continued to stand in the way of the canonization of the holy man. DLAUHO-WESKY of Longavilla, a canon of Prague, composed, about 1670, a "Life of the Confessor of Queen Johanna,"

which he solemnly declared he had compiled from various trustworthy and unquestionable manuscript sources. This, however, he did not print himself, but handed it over to the Jesuit, BOHUSLAUS BALBINUS, a person of extraordinary literary talent, and great proficiency in the history of Bohemia, as well as considerable patriotic feeling. Balbinus wrote an entirely new biography of the holy man, containing a large number of details utterly unknown before, which he affirmed he had obtained from manuscript sources, as well as from printed books. Towards the end he acknowledged his debt to Dlauhowesky, to whom he said he owed information obtained from most trustworthy and unquestionable manuscripts. He never, however, tells us, that he had seen these manuscripts himself, and the narrative of Dlauhowesky could not but have excited considerable doubts in his mind in several instances, *e. g.*, with regard to the ancient chapel alleged to have been built upon the site of the house in which John of Nepomuk was said to have been born. Otto Abel gives the narrative of Balbinus at length, and I follow his example, that it may be seen upon how slight a foundation a superstructure of fiction can be raised, if a saint be required for any special ecclesiastical purpose.

“2. St. John of Nepomuk was born at Nepomuk, a town situated in the circle of Pilsen (now in that of Klattau), in what year is not exactly known, but probably between 1320 and 1330. His parents were not so much distinguished for wealth and good family, as for piety. A proof of their piety is, that after being long childless, they obtained this son in advanced age by prayers and vows, from the Mother of God.

"3. At his birth bright flames were seen coming down from heaven, and surrounding the house in which he was born with beautiful and harmless light. As soon as the boy went to school, he learned accurately the service at the holy sacrifice of the mass, and from that time forth allowed nothing to prevent him from running daily with the first dawn from the town to the nearest Cistercian convent, and serving the priest at the altar. Already then men of understanding thought that something great was some day to be expected from the boy John.

"4. Later, he was taken by his parents to the grammar-school at Saatz, where he was instructed in the elements of the sciences, and even then took especial delight in the study of eloquence. When there was nothing more there for him to learn, he went to the University of Prague, which had shortly before (1348) been founded by the Emperor Charles IV., where he soon attained to the position of master of philosophy and doctor of theology and canon law.

"5. John had long felt internally the call to the priesthood. After having withdrawn himself for a whole month from all worldly matters, and implored the blessing of Heaven with prayer, with castigation of the body, and with purification of the conscience, he received ordination. In a short time he had at Prague the reputation of being the first preacher in the place. The position in the Teyn church was therefore entrusted to him, and although such celebrated pulpit orators as Conrad of Stiekna and Militz had preceded him there, yet were these entirely forgotten in comparison with his eloquence.

"6. The diligence, aptitude for learning, and rectitude of the holy John, and the esteem in which he was universally held, moved the archbishop to make him a canon, and at the same time to entrust him, by presentation of the emperor, with the office of preacher in the (cathedral) church of St. Vitus. The principal subject of his sermons was CONFESSION; and he withal assailed with words of rebuke the unbridled life of the nobility and the court, the drunkenness, the luxury, and all the vices of that corrupt time, and depicted the punishments threatened by Heaven to such things. The Emperor Wenceslas was not as

yet sunk in the abyss of wickedness, he therefore allowed himself, in many respects, to be led by the words and example of the holy John.

“7. According to ancient tradition, John would then have been destined above all others for the vacant bishopric of Leitomyšl, but he himself induced the king to give up the project. The provostship of the Wyssehrad, then the first position in the kingdom, after that of the archbishop, the income whereof amounted to 800,000 Hungarian florins, was likewise offered him by Wenceslas, but likewise declined. Finally, he accepted from the king and queen merely the office of almoner, that his modesty might not be construed into ingratitude and arrogance.¹

“8. The esteem in which the holy man was held increased from day to day. This moved the Empress Johanna, a daughter of Duke Albert of Bavaria and Holland, a lady conspicuous for purity of soul, innocence, piety, and other royal virtues, to select him for her confessor. Others followed her example. The nuns in the Convent of St. George on the Hradschin proceeded under his direction, not with steps, no, as it were, with wings, to the highest pinnacle of godliness.

“9. Meanwhile, the Emperor Wenceslas was growing worse and worse, and persecuted Queen Johanna with bitter hatred. It was in the year 1383: the queen saw no comfort and no joy for herself more on earth, for she was horrified at his daily crimes and his cruelty, which went so far that at his meals he enjoyed the murder of persons of rank for his dessert. She now frequented the church still more, confessed even her smallest faults with tears, scourged herself, tended the poor, and prayed to God day and night to give her husband a better mind.

“10. Wenceslas, who ought to have been pleased thereat, hated her on this account more and more. The desire now occurred to him to know what the queen confessed to the priest, what her sins were, what she thought of himself, whether she loved anybody else, and such other things as a tyrant's sus-

¹ We have already seen that the historical John was by no means addicted to refusing preferment.

picion is wont to imagine. It was vain trouble to inquire this from the queen. He therefore summoned the holy John before him, and after conversing on various subjects, came to speak upon that of holy confession, and how wives ought not to have any secrets from their husbands; and proceeded to promise John treasures and honours and anything he wished for if he would but impart to him what the queen had confessed. He was horrified at so wicked a suggestion, and by his serious and free-spoken language induced the king temporarily to desist from his purpose.

“ 11. Not long afterwards it happened, that the royal cook set on table a badly roasted fowl, whereat Wenceslas fell into so furious a rage, that he ordered the cook to be bound and cast into the fire. Pale for fear, the courtiers looked at each other, but no one ventured to interfere. John alone, who was then in the palace, and knew how to speak as well as how to keep silence at the proper time, came forwards and made, first gentle, and then more forcible, remonstrances to the king. But he had not spoken much, when the king caused him to be conducted to the lowest dungeon, where he had to spend several days in filth and darkness, in hunger and thirst, without being in the slightest degree shaken by the warning brought him by the gaoler, to procure himself freedom by fulfilment of the imperial wish.

“ 12. Ere long a courtier came, begged him in the king's name to forget the past, and invited him to table on the following day. He appeared, and again came the king with his desire, threatened and flattered him, and left nothing untried to make him compliant; but when the conscientious priest remained immovable, he became furious, caused the executioner, whom he always had at hand, and whom he called his gossip, to be summoned, and had him stretched upon the rack by this man and his underlings and tortured with burning torches. Yet no torments could overcome the steadfast endurance of the holy John, and the attempt with the rack was at length given up.

“ 13. The emperor ¹ then released him, and he, as if nothing

¹ Wenceslas IV. was elected “King of the Romans” in the

had happened to him, got over his tortures in quiet, without telling anybody about them, and as soon as his wounds were healed, went back again with increased zeal to his old occupations, in order thus to prepare himself for the death, the near approach of which he foresaw. When he preached again in the cathedral he applied to himself the words of Christ, 'Yet a little while will ye see me,' and prophesied his death with a cheerful countenance and in precise language, and, as now the way was made ready for revelation from heaven, began, full of the spirit of prophecy, to depict with tears the future condition of Bohemia, and the near approaching misfortune, the heresy that would arise out of hell, and would make no distinction between things sacred and things profane; how all the churches and convents in the land of Bohemia would be given to the flames, how holy and ordained men would be tortured to death, and religion would be threatened with utter destruction. Finally he bade farewell to all, begging in particular the prelates and canons of the Church at Prague for forgiveness, and thus closed his discourse amidst universal grief and astonishment.

"14. A few days afterwards the holy John made a pilgrimage to Bunzlau, to the statue of the Mother of God, which is there, and which is the oldest in all Bohemia. As he returned to Prague in the evening, he was seen by the Emperor Wenceslas, who was just then idly looking out of the window. Suddenly the old thoughts with regard to his wife returned to him, and he remembered the repeated refusals which he had experienced from John, and was unable to curb himself any longer. In a moment he caused him to be brought before him and addressed him in his rage with the words: 'Hear, parson! thou must die; if thou dost not instantly inform me exactly what my wife has confessed to thee, it is all up with thee. By God! thou shalt have to swallow water.' The holy John expressed his horror thereat, not by words, but by looks; and at a sign from the king he was

lifetime of his father, the Emperor Charles IV., but never actually received the imperial crown from the Pope himself. He was thus emperor only by courtesy.

immediately seized and taken into another room, dragged in the night to the bridge over the Moldau, bound hand and foot, and thrown into the river. This happened on the day before Ascension (29 April), 1383.

“15. The death, which the emperor had wished to keep entirely secret, was immediately made known by celestial miracles. The fire and flames, which had distinguished the holy man at his birth, surrounded him also in death; the whole Moldau reflected them. Countless, wondrously bright lights were seen floating upon the river, which was just then very swollen, and had run over its banks; but the body glided slowly down the stream, accompanied by the lights, as it were, to its funeral. All Prague streamed to the strange spectacle. The morning explained the matter; there lay the soulless body, with mild countenance, in its canonical dress, upon the strand. When the canons of Prague heard of the horrible event, they immediately arranged a solemn procession, brought the holy corpse of their brother from the river to the nearest church, which was that of the Holy Cross, and placed it there temporarily, till a more worthy grave should be provided for it in the Cathedral of St. Vitus. This pious and at the same time courageous intention did not remain unrewarded. For when they were digging a grave in the Church of St. Vitus, they found a great treasure, gold and silver and a quantity of other valuables, as if the saint had wished to prove to them his gratitude for his honourable burial.

“16. But a countless multitude crowded to the church of the Holy Cross to see the holy body, and this was the first veneration which the martyr received from the people; they kissed his hands and feet and commended themselves to his intercession. When this came to the emperor's ears, he sent word to the clergy at the church of the Holy Cross, that they should leave such innovations alone, should keep the people away, and put the body in a retired corner. This command was punctiliously obeyed, but the fame of the saint was only increased thereby; the body spread around it so powerful and celestial a perfume, that its position could not remain concealed, and the

people assembled anew. And now everything was ready for the funeral ceremony; the canons and the entire clergy formed a procession and, accompanied by a countless crowd of people, brought under ringing of all the bells the holy body to the cathedral in the Hradschin. They were here obliged to yield to the pressure of the populace and open the coffin once more, and a number of sick persons were healed through touching the holy corpse. But Queen Johanna, who knew that it was on her account that the saint had been obliged to suffer death, seeing no way of escape from her sufferings, began to pine away, and died childless on January 1, 1387."

In Caps. 17-21, Balbinus gives an account of the cultus, &c., of the saint from time immemorial, and in Caps. 22-31 relates his miracles, but I think the above long extract will be sufficient for historical purposes.

My readers will see, that, with the exception of its relation to the brief and questionable extracts from Paul Zidek and Hajek given above, the whole of this performance of the Jesuit Balbinus is the purest invention, fiction, and romance imaginable. Yet such was the power and influence of the Jesuits at the commencement of the 18th century, that this fiction was incorporated, not merely with the ACTA, but even with the BULL of canonization of St. John Nepomucen, thus bringing into contempt the whole system and method of canonization of the church, of which they profess to be the mainstay.

How far Balbinus trusted blindly to Dlauhowesky's assurance, which the Bollandists ("Act. Sanct." Maij. iii. 667) affirm him to have received, to the effect that Dlauhowesky had seen certain very ancient MS. records of that age, and how far he knowingly took a share in the imposture, is difficult to ascertain.

Palacky praises Balbinus's industry and patriotism, but says that his credulity was unfortunately equal to his industry, and that his patriotism too often gave wings to his imagination at the expense of truth, and even accuses him, in one case, of pure invention, and in another of wilful suppression. ("Würdigung der böhm. Geschichts." xvii. xviii.; "Hist. of Bohemia," III. i. 413, note 424, and 168, note 202.) It seems, however, beyond question, that he accepted and acted upon the principle that "the end justifies the means," which, as is well known, has been the standing reproach of his order ever since the immortal "Lettres à un Provincial" of Pascal. It is very likely that he thought he was conferring a benefit on his country, when he endeavoured to procure her a saint, the alleged cause of whose martyrdom and canonization should be both novel, peculiar, and surpassing.

Balbinus's first idea was to send his book into the world under the wing of the cathedral chapter of Prague. He therefore sent it to that corporation, with a dedication dated Feb. 20, 1671, and the Dean Pessina was commissioned to examine the narrative. The result of his examination was, that the chapter declined the proffered dedication, but the reasons which led it to do so are unknown. The manuscript, as revised and corrected by Pessina, was deposited among the archives of the chapter, and may possibly be still in existence there.

A potent opponent of the "cultus" of the future saint now declared himself in the person of MATTHÆUS FERDINAND, the then Archbishop of Prague, who went to Nepomuk, ordered the church to be opened, shook

his Spanish stick with vehemence against the likeness of John of Nepomuk over the high altar, and exclaimed: "What is *he* doing there? *He* is no saint. Take him down at once."¹ His commands were obeyed, and the projected canonization was in the greatest danger.

As soon as Balbinus heard the startling news, he hastened to Nepomuk, ostensibly to perform his devotions before the likeness of the saint, but really to confer with Count Wenceslas von Sternberg. The count was terribly frightened, and put various questions to the Jesuit, to which he eventually required written answers, which Balbinus gave him on May 23, 1673.

Pope Urban VIII. had, by a Bull dated April 4, 1625, endeavoured to prevent abuses in the introduction of new cultuses, but had made an exception in favour of such as had subsisted, either from time immemorial, or for a very considerable time with the knowledge and permission of the See of Rome, or of the proper Bishop. Balbinus came to the conclusion that Pope Urban had consequently allowed the adoration of John Nepomucen, and therefore no successor of his could prohibit it. He further asserted very positively, that by "time immemorial" only a hundred years were to be understood. He sent the count the portion of his biography—the whole of it having meanwhile gone to Belgium to be printed—which treated of the cultus alleged to have subsisted since the death of the martyr. "I know," wrote he, with

¹ Berghauer, Prot. Pœn. ii. 183.

confident audacity, "that nobody denies this, not even those who oppose the cultus of the saint through ignorance or unprofitable conscientiousness."

Wenceslas of Sternberg now applied to the archbishop, and did so at a very favourable moment. For the latter was then seriously ill, and one hand was visibly withering away. The archbishop had persuaded himself, or allowed himself to be persuaded, that the evil had commenced from the time when he had ordered the likeness of the saint to be taken down at Nepomuk. He now regretted his hasty conduct, and promised to use his utmost exertions that the martyr might be canonized by the Holy See.

The archbishop thought it right to interrogate the Prague Jesuits in writing, but, unfortunately, this document is not to be found. The answer, however, given to it by one of them, EMMANUEL OF BOYE, on June 8, 1673, is extant, and has been thoroughly examined by Professor Reimann. From this it appears that the archbishop wanted exact information respecting the martyr, separating the certain from the uncertain, and that which trustworthy writers had delivered from that which was merely current from hearsay, or founded on conjecture. Herein the Jesuit promised the assistance of the whole college, but referred to two colleagues who were acquainted with the whole matter, Tanner in Olmütz, and our friend Balbinus. But, a thing worthy of notice, Father Emmanuel advised the archbishop NOT to proceed immediately in the first instance with such methods of proof.

The archbishop's idea seems to have been, first to collect satisfactory information, and then apply to the

Apostolic See for an office and mass for the martyr, as a preliminary step towards his canonization. Father Emmanuel endeavoured to find a shorter way through the immediate action of the archbishop, but was unable to discover a satisfactory precedent or canon for such a proceeding, and feared besides, that the Congregation of Rites at Rome might take offence thereat, and be more difficult to deal with in the subsequent negotiations. He therefore commended the views of the archbishop, but at the same time displayed his utter ignorance of the history of the legend by expressing the wish, that earlier archbishops had tried the other path previously to the council of Trent !

It is manifest that Father Emmanuel expected difficulties, and did not build with any confidence on the compliant temper of the Roman Curia. He therefore mentions other means, and wishes to have the chair of St. Peter taken by storm with petitions. He further hit upon the clever idea, that perhaps the Emperor Leopold's betrothed might be prevailed upon to ask for an office and mass for the martyr, as her first request from the Apostolic See. Moreover, his advice was, that the archbishop should exhibit no proofs in the first petition, but should proceed under the assumption that, as the "cultus" had subsisted nearly 300 years, nothing was wanting but the conversion of private into public adoration. Father Emmanuel's wish and hope was, that the Congregation of Rites would commission the archbishop to institute the process and then to ratify its object. That, therefore, no occasion for scruples might be given, he proposed that but little should be set down in writing at first,

but that it should be generally stated that very many miracles performed by the saint were current in the mouths of the people, although a large number of documents had perished through the various heresies and insurrections.

Finally, Father Emmanuel proposed to lay very great stress, firstly, on the occasion of the martyrdom, which exhibited a precedent so peculiar, that there was scarcely anything so glorious in ecclesiastical history; secondly, on the increased brilliancy which would accrue to the clergy through the honour of a man who had suffered in so sacred a cause, especially in a country surrounded by heresies, and not yet entirely purified from them; and finally, on the danger to religion, if even a slight suspicion should arise among the people, that it could be doubted whether the holy man were worthy of the honour or no.

Such were the counsels of the Jesuit. However, the archbishop died on April 29th, 1675, without doing anything more than dedicating to the Empress Claudia a little book, entitled, "The Holy Treasure of the Cathedral of Prague," containing a portrait of the martyr on the frontispiece, and a brief life of him among those of the other patrons of the country. The archbishop appears, however, in 1674, to have been still reckoned among the opponents of the public adoration of the saint.

A remarkable document was signed, after consultation, by the Canons of Prague on September 14th, 1675. In this they testify, that John was thrown into the Moldau for refusing to violate the seal of confession, and had been considered a saint and martyr from

the day of his death. In giving reasons for this statement they seem to rely upon the biography of Balbinus, which was still unprinted, yet without mentioning it, but go still further than it does in their assertions.

With regard to the altar, which, according to Balbinus, Archbishop Lohelius dedicated to John of Nepomuk and other saints in 1621, they impudently assert that it had belonged to the martyr from time immemorial.

According to Tanner, the Archduke Leopold William founded a lamp to burn for ever. Balbinus speaks only of one lamp, and the Archbishop Matthæus Ferdinand says that this one had burned day and night from time immemorial. On the other hand Dean Pessina and the Canons of Prague are acquainted with two lamps; one, they say, had been there from the beginning, the other was added in 1621.

Further, the dean and chapter not only mention an original ancient chapel which they very well knew had never existed, but declare that the new church had been, in spite of the events above related, built in honour of Jónh of Nepomuk, and assert that the Archbishop Ernest of Harrach had repeatedly read mass in it, and approved of everything, even to the likeness with the glory over the high altar.

“Why then” proceeds Professor Reimann, with righteous indignation, “this audacious lying on the part of the dean and chapter? Simply because it was their wish to prove that the adoration of the saint was truly ancient, and had taken place with the knowledge and permission of the archbishop, as the above cited bull of Urban VIII. prescribes.” Of the inter-

ruption to the continuity of the cultus caused by the late Archbishop Matthæus Ferdinand and his Spanish stick they of course do not say a single word.

However, this despicable conduct availed them little, and the visit of Canon Christopher Baron Talmberg to Rome, with the proposed basis of canonization, was utterly unsuccessful. The Dean Pessina soon afterwards (1677) published his "*Mars Moravicus*," in which mention is made of John of Nepomuk, but none of Balbinus's fictions are fathered, except the passage in which the appearance of the lights over the corpse of the martyr is so vividly depicted. However, Pessina complains bitterly enough of the opposition to the adoration of the saint, which he affirms to have continued uninterruptedly for almost three hundred years. He died in 1680.

In the same year appeared Balbinus's romance in the great collection of "*Lives of the Saints*," published at Antwerp by the Jesuits Heuschen and Papebroch, the so-called BOLLANDISTS; and it was also printed separately. Balbinus then introduced it into his "*Boëmia Sancta*," which was published at Prague in 1682, and was dedicated to the Archbishop John Frederic of Waldstein. In 1684 a canon of Prague, Macarius of Merfelitz, elaborated and printed a further life of the martyr, with which the archbishop sent him to Rome to inquire as to the possibility of effecting the canonization, or, at any rate, of obtaining a public cultus, with office and mass, from the Apostolic See. Nothing further is known about his mission, but miracles ere long began to be performed by the holy martyr; some of the usual beneficent

order, others simply ludicrous, and others of a most scandalous and iniquitous nature, into which I shall enter more particularly, when I come to consider the "Acta" of the canonization, and Berghauer's "Protomartyr Penitentiae."

In 1690, Ridl, Dean of Nepomuk, published a little book under the title, "The Garden of Grünberg," in which he affirms, that credible citizens of Nepomuk asserted, that they had heard from their ancestors, that ever since John of Nepomuk's death it had been impossible for anybody to live in peace and quiet in the house in which he was born. A flat contradiction was thus given to the existence of the chapel built, as we have seen, on the site of the self-same house, by the inventive genius of Dlauhowesky, and vouched for by the respectable Dean and Chapter of Prague. It must not be left unnoticed either, how, within ten years after the publication of Balbinus's romance, people in Nepomuk began to appeal to their ancestors, and how the traditions thus created were brought forward at the canonization in confirmation of the writers who had created them.

Pilgrimages now began to be made to Nepomuk every 16th of May, and in 1691 Dlauhowesky himself took the principal position in the procession. In 1697, however, the Chapter of Prague instituted a special inquiry, in order that the proceedings preliminary to canonization might be properly and legally conducted; and their special-procurator, Henry Barthel, applied, amongst others, to the then Dean of Nepomuk, MATTHÆUS JOSEF NEWSCHETA. Berghauer (ii. 49), gives only a portion of the dean's letter in

reply, but Höfler several years ago¹ published the following remarks from a notice written by him:

“It is not true, that the house in which John of Nepomuk was born was converted into a chapel immediately after his death. Not till 1643 did Count Francis of Sternberg build there a church in honour of St. John the Baptist, and that with permission of the archbishop; and in it sermons were not preached about John of Nepomuk, but upon the Gospel for every Sunday. On occasion of great festivals a procession went to a church on the Grünberg, but it was to the Church of St. Adalbert. Of the ancient popular songs and ballads, of which Balbinus speaks, nothing whatever is to be found. Just as little is known about the statement, that in the pestilence of 1649 people were healed through the intercession of John of Nepomuk, and about the previous sterility of his mother and her vow. One citizen, and one only, affirms himself to have heard from his ancestors, that flames had appeared over the house at his birth. At Balbinus's death people had been very anxious to know from what sources he had derived his detailed narratives, but the most careful examination of what he left behind him had not produced any MSS. relating to the life of John of Nepomuk.”

This document does not give us much new information, but it exhibits at once the doubtful position of Balbinus's romance at the end of the seventeenth century, and the amazing perfidy and impudence of the Jesuits in forcing such a tissue of fictions on the Church of Rome, against light and knowledge, at the canonization of the saint. However, all members of their order must not be included in this sweeping censure. ANDREAS FREYBERGER, the Archivarius, wrote

¹ “Geschichtschreiber der Hussitischen Bewegung,” iii. 152. (Vienna, 1866.)

in 1698, apparently upon the basis of the above-quoted note of Dean Newscheta, "Animadversions on the Life of S. John Nepomucen, published by Balbinus in 1680," which still exist in MS. in the archives of the Chapter of Prague. He says: "The questionable miracles with regard to the sterility of the parents, and the recovery of health by the aid of the Holy Virgin, must certainly have been invented by Balbinus, inasmuch as he cannot cite any writer in their behalf." He also accuses him of having rhetorically embellished with mythological pen a good deal that is entirely baseless in the life of the saint. He mentions the rejection of Balbinus's proposed dedication of his work to the chapter in 1671,¹ and apologizes for its first editors, the Bollandists, who had made many inquiries of Balbinus, but, living out of Bohemia, and not being well acquainted with the sources of the history of the country, had been unable to penetrate to the truth. When, however, relying upon Balbinus, they allowed his biography to be printed, they could not have withdrawn it from further examination. It does not appear that Freyberger doubted the main circumstances of the legend, or the dualism introduced by Hajek.

Both Balbinus and the arch-forgery Dlauhowesky died without being called to account, and it was not till 1715 that serious preparations for the canonization began to be made at Prague. Two processes were instituted, and the "ACTA" form a printed volume of

¹ Frind (p. 7, ed. 2) ascribes the rejection of the dedication to Freyberger's paper, which appears to be an impossibility.

300 quarto pages (Vienna 1722 and Verona 1725),¹ which I have carefully examined. Between the real date of the martyr's death (1393) and the publication of Hajek's chronicle (1441) only THREE citations are made, those from Paul Zidek and from Wenceslas's sentence of deposition given above, and one in the "Summarium" No. 3, from a MS. in the archives of the Chapter of Prague, "Fol. i. 1383: Johannes de Pomuk submersus de ponte, Presbyter, Decretorum Doctor, &c.," which appears to be identical with one of those jottings of John of Krumlow, Dean of Prague, that probably misled Hajek.

It is satisfactory to be able to say that the only clearly scandalous and disgraceful miracle cited in the "Acta" is this:—"A Moravian mason, arrested by the officers of justice on account of a mortal wound inflicted on his wife, was being conducted to prison, but, imploring the aid of the servant of God, easily escaped from their hands." This is given at greater length by Berghauer.

But the most noticeable things in the "Acta" are the "Animadversions" of the "Promotor fidei," or opponent of the canonization, Cardinal PROSPER LAMBERTINI, afterwards Pope Benedict XIV.

Novak in his "Svaty Jan Nepomucky," p. 54, draws attention to the fact that Lambertini objected, that several miracles were ascribed to John the confessor of the Queen of 1383, which took place at the death of the general vicar in 1393, and that therefore

¹ The text in these editions is identical, but the paging is different. I quote the *Vienna* edition.

they were erroneously ascribed to the said confessor. The reply of the advocate (FRANCHELUCCI) was, that the same things may have been repeated at the death of both these men, who had led godly lives. But to go into particulars.

In No. 1, p. 175, the Promotor objects:—"There are no 'Acta' of the martyrdom brought forwards, nor contemporary writers, who relate the martyrdom with its details."

To this it is replied; that it was of no consequence to possess the documents from which Balbinus composed his narrative. No doubt he had such, and he is corroborated by other authors and witnesses.

In No. 2, p. 178, the Promotor, referring to Wenceslas's sentence of deposition observes; that it appears very awkward under such circumstances, that Wenceslas should have caused a servant of God to be thrown into the river for refusing to open to him the sacramental seal, and that this crime should not have been mentioned in the sentence.

To this it is replied; that the deficient mention of the cause of martyrdom in the sentence of deposition is of no consequence.

In No. 4 the Promotor says:—"Fourthly, it is related that the river Moldau, into which the servant of God was thrown, immediately dried up, and thus his body was miraculously found, as is stated in the Summary No. 11, whereas the drying up of the river did not happen at the death of the servant of God, John Nepomucen, but ten years after his death, *i. e.*, when by order of the same Wenceslas the suffragan of the Archbishop of Prague was drowned in the same river,

as is well shown by the continuers of the Bollandists' work, tom. iii. May, p. 678, letter i.; wherefore, if report has been mendacious in this circumstance, it may have been so on other circumstances appertaining to the martyrdom."

The reply to this is, that the same thing may have happened twice! Also that Paul Zidek mentions the drying up of the river in connection with the martyrdom.

It is thus manifest that the "Acta" expressly assume, that the vicar-general of 1393 was not intended to be canonized. Yet, if he was not canonized in consequence of these very "Acta," who was? The choice of alternatives lies plainly between him and a person who never existed.

It is clear that the Promotor did his duty, and we can only marvel at the assurance of the judges in passing over such genuine historical objections as were raised by him, in favour of such weak and frivolous solutions as those offered by the advocate. But the Jesuits were determined to have their saint, the saint had been ordered and PAID FOR, witness the large sums of money which are vaunted of as expended, in order to effect the canonization! ("Acta," p. 428; "Bergh. Prot." ii. 42).

In the first process, forty-nine witnesses were examined at Prague, three at Olmütz, and three at Vienna. Some of the evidence is sufficiently amusing to be recorded here, although many of the witnesses do nothing but repeat what they have heard and *read* about the saint, so that their testimony can have answered no imaginable purpose, except that of imposing upon the unlearned.

The fourteenth witness (p. 118), Bohuslaus Joannes Lvorzikowsky a Kundraticz, deposes :

“ When I was about eighteen years of age and in the bloom of youth, I saw in the Church of St. Wenceslas, on the Hill Prosik, near Prague, a statue of this saint carved very rudely in a manner to excite laughter, and I pointed it out with laughter to honourable gentlemen who were sitting by me. I immediately felt remorse of conscience for fear of incurring some shame that day on that account. Which also happened to me that very day. After dinner, on my way home to Prague in a carriage, I saw coming after me those same honourable persons who had previously been with me in the church, and caused my carriage to stop till they came up. Wishing to speak with them, I got down from my carriage into the road, which was level and neither muddy nor slippery in any wise. On a sudden I fell to the ground, and was for a considerable time, as it were, bound hand and foot and unable to lift myself up and rise, until the said honourable gentlemen had ridiculed me exceedingly and departed.”

The sixteenth witness, D. Martinus Hawliczek, aged 70, testifies :

“ I have heard from my ancestors and know myself, that nobody was able to dwell quietly in that house (*i. e.* the one in which John of Nepomuk was born), especially the potter, John Gelinek, and a baker, both citizens of Nepomuk, both of whom dwelt in that house, but without peace and the blessing of God.”

The fifteenth witness, Paulus Ozenaschek, says :

“ I have heard that there was no peace till it was turned into a church.”

N.B. As Otto Abel remarks, the saint was perfectly quiescent while his enemies were in power, or were, at

any rate, not entirely suppressed ; but when his friends of the Hapsburg dynasty had fully established themselves on the ruins of the liberties of the country, the house began to be haunted, and he began to make himself a nuisance to its inhabitants. More than two CENTURIES of quiescence, and then this sudden energy and activity, present a very singular phenomenon.

In p. 191, the second process (of the year 1719) commences. The arguments of the Promotor turn principally upon the technical difficulty of proving the continuous "cultus" of the martyr from 1533 to 1634, Hajek having only written in 1541. A good deal of ink is expended on both sides in arguing whether the railing round the tomb was intended to prevent or to augment the reverence paid to the saint. From p. 248 to p. 291, we find a collection of letters addressed to the Pope and the Sacred Congregation by persons of the highest rank, urging the proposed canonization, in accordance with the advice of Father Emmanuel, above mentioned.

Sixteen witnesses were also examined. The tenth of these, the very Rev. Æmilian Koterowski, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of St. John sub Rupe, testifies :

"Amongst other miracles, I remember two, one of a person condemned to death for fraudulent official conduct (*prevaricatio*), who by the interposition of St. John Nepomucen was not only released from the penalty of death, but also restored to his office. Likewise of a certain lady, who having lost certain jewels, and having caused a mass to be celebrated at the sepulchre of the blessed John Nepomucen, recovered the lost jewels, and then, lamenting the payment she had made for the mass, found that very sum of money in her desk."

In 1719 the grave was opened, and in 1721 the saint was beatified by Innocent XIII. In 1723 the miracles alleged to have been wrought by the saint were examined into, and four eventually selected as indubitable, and in 1729 the final Bull of canonization was issued, embodying, in considerable detail, the romance of Balbinus as very truth!

But the biography of the saint culminated in the two folio volumes of the "PROTOMARTYR PENITENTIAE OF ADALBERT BERGHAEUER," which appeared, the first in 1736, and the second in 1761. On the frontispiece of the first volume, the saint appears with an ordinary glory round his head; on that of the second, with the five stars, which were entirely unknown before his canonization.

This enormous work of Berghauer's contains but little additional information, being filled up with irrelevant matter. It gives, however, the Bull of canonization at length (ii. 435), and goes fully into the four selected miracles, with regard to which the Promotor did his duty fairly enough, and we can only wonder at the folly or assurance that considered his arguments rebutted by the trifling replies of the advocate.

These miracles were:

- (1). The preservation of the tongue of the saint.
- (2). Its extraordinary swelling and change of colour on Jan. 27, 1725.
- (3). The cure of Anna Theresia Krebsin, accompanied by a vision of the saint.
- (4). The preservation of a little girl, Rosalia Hodaniana, from drowning and destruction by the wheels of her father's mill.

But the principal charm of Berghauer's work is the simplicity with which he relates the miracles of the saint, some of which are so ludicrous, and others so scandalous, that they have a historical value of their own, as showing the degraded state into which Jesuit supremacy had brought the Austrian clergy, and how necessary the suppression of their order was in the interests of common decency and morality.

Berghauer's own experience of the beneficent interposition of his St. John (ii. 149) is amusing. He tells us that a tremendous fire broke out on May 15, in the manorial brewery at Tschohau, and that seeing no other help, he briefly exhorted the people to ask the aid of St. John Nepomucen, and hastened to the side altar of that martyr, where he prostrated himself and made a vow, that if he would but protect the church, parsonage, and houses of the villagers from the flames, he himself would fast for four Fridays on bread and water in his honour. Suddenly the wind lulled, and the flames made no further progress.

In p. 153 he tells us that a wood-carver was making a statue of the saint, and asked some of the people sitting in a public-house close by to help him to lift it. One of these fellows, while helping, bawled out: "You cursèd log, how heavy you are." He afterwards sat again at the table; and having occasion to go out, his boots suddenly emitted sparks of fire, and there was a great deal of trouble to prevent the poor fellow from being burned to death. [Were there no squibs in Austria, O worthy prelate, that a saint must have done this deed?]

In p. 161 we read, that a nun had caused a side-face

of St. John Nepomucen to be painted, and some of the other nuns declared that they could not pay their devotions to a one-eyed saint, which greatly hurt her feelings. Next day it was found that the portrait had so changed its position that part of the other eye was visible. The painter was horribly astounded, and could not swear in which position he had painted the picture, but verily believed that he had not painted it as it then appeared.

In p. 174 it is stated that a Moravian mason had quarrelled violently with his wife, that he wounded her mortally in his fury, and that she afterwards died. The officers of justice were taking him to prison, when he took St. John Nepomucen for his patron, and trusting in his protection jumped into a river then swollen with a flood, and thus escaped by swimming. This miracle is also mentioned in the "Acta" as above related.

In p. 187 we find that a young gentleman of family had seduced a maid-servant. The child which she bore was secretly put out of the way in the house. The matter being, however, known to several of the servants, became noised abroad, and a criminal inquiry was at hand. The guilty youth vowed to make a pilgrimage to the grave of St. John Nepomucen if he would help him out of the scrape, and when the witnesses came to be examined, all those who could best have given evidence were passed over, and a scamp of a boy (*scurrilis puer*) was severely scolded for having invented and spread the calumny, which caused everybody to hold his tongue, and some of the servants actually begged pardon. The young gentleman was

saved, and the saint received a present of silver plate in addition to the pilgrimage.

In p. 181 we read that in a somewhat similar case the father of the seduced damsel, who was quite an ordinary person, betook himself to the aid of the law, in order to obtain a larger sum of money. The father of the sinful young man, a gentleman of rank, looked forward with terror to the shame which would overwhelm his son and his whole family, if the matter should become generally known. He addressed a brief but earnest prayer to the saint, and lo! at the decisive moment the damsel had disappeared, and nobody heard any more of her, although some years afterwards it became known that she was still alive.

How deeply debased must have been the moral tone of a prelate, who could consider and record such miracles as these as an honour to his saint! Such, however, were the fruits of Jesuit supremacy and Jesuit saint-manufacture.

In p. 177 we read an account of the "elevation" of the petticoats of the naughty woman, who had ventured to step on the grave of the holy man, and the Jesuit Albert Chanowsky, who gives the account, says in the MSS. he left behind him at his death, that he thought, that as he had outgrown petticoats, nothing of the sort could happen to him, and tempted the saint in like manner. However, on his return home he stepped into a gutter up to the knees, and by the crucifix on the bridge over the Moldau, tumbled at full length in the mud. A sure proof of the holiness of the saint.

There are other instances of the saint's interference

with petticoats, but I do not think my fair readers will thank me for dilating upon them, so I must leave them for Jesuits and prelates of the church which canonized the saint, to record and admire.

But enough of miracles, whether beneficent, ludicrous, or scandalous. Let me now proceed with the narrative, as I have hitherto done, as nearly as possible in chronological order. During the supremacy of the Jesuits no voice could uplift itself in Austria against this mighty saint, and, of course, the proper materials for investigating the truth were unobtainable in any other country. But in 1773 their order was dissolved, and it was not long before truth made herself heard against the imposture. Nay, even in 1747 the Augustinian Father ATHANASIUS wrote an essay, which, for excellent reasons, he kept a strict secret within a small circle of friends, in which he contended that there was but one John of Nepomuk, and that he was not confessor of Queen Johanna, but of Wenceslas's second wife, Queen Sophia. Also, in 1754, WOKAUN, Suffragan Bishop of Prague, on occasion of a legal dispute with the Abbot of Brzewnów, procured from the Vatican a copy of Archbishop John of Jenstein's official complaint against King Wenceslas, which must have fallen like a thunderbolt amongst those of the venerated of the saint who became acquainted with it. Since no mention was made in this, as we have already seen, of the seal of confession, Wokaun and the Piarist GELASIUS DOBNER, a man whose services to the cause of Bohemian history and literature are undoubtedly great, were driven to the extraordinary subterfuge of assuming that the confirmation of the Abbot of Kla-

drau was the *alleged and official*, while the refusal to reveal the queen's confession was the *real and secret* cause of Wenceslas's violence against the vicar-general. The matter, however, did not, even under these circumstances, come generally before the public eye.

But in 1783, ten years after the dissolution of the Jesuit order, the Dean of Reichstadt, VON SCHÖNFELD, preached and published a sermon on the thesis: "The Catholic religion ought to be preached zealously and defended prudently, even as Nepomucen preached and defended it." The Jesuits being no more in the land, an anonymous writer assailed the oration. The Chevalier VON STEINSBERG, who the year before had published a brief defence of King Wenceslas, in which he had spoken only of the general-vicar, without distinguishing him from the saint, now proceeded to discuss the following questions: (1.) Whether St. John Nepomucen had ever existed? (2.) Whether Johanko of Pomuk could be accepted as a saint and martyr in his stead? He dedicated his essay to the Chapter of Prague, and concluded it with the words: "It is, I hope, now pretty well proved that history knows only of one John of Nepomuk, that this John of Pomuk was not confessor of the queen, but general-vicar, and that he was not thrown into the river on account of the sacrament of confession, but from different causes, because he had confirmed a new abbot at Kladrau contrary to Wenceslas's will, and he was, therefore, a martyr of the immunity of the clergy."

In 1784, Matth. Johann Brnda wrote a pamphlet, maintaining that John of Pomuk must have been Queen Johanna's confessor, and that Wenceslas must

have bottled up his anger till the opportunity of venting it arrived, in 1393. GELASIUS DOBNER, in 1784, came forward with his "Vindiciæ," in which he defended the extraordinary subterfuge above mentioned, which appears to have been due originally to the suffragan bishop WOKAUN. He quotes from the "Appendix ad Gundlingiana" (p. 117) a passage professing to be from a "*liber bipartitus de rebus ecclesiasticis et profanis sui temporis*" by ADAM of NECZETIC, a canon of Prague and general-vicar, which states that "Wenceslas did not scorn the bath-maid Susanna, whom he had as a wife, even after his marriage with Sophia of Bavaria." Dobner honestly admits that he offered a large reward and a heavy price for the MS. of Adam of Neczetic, but was unable to learn anything whatever about it. Dr. Palacky informs me, that there never was any such chronicler or annalist, although there was a canon of Prague of that name, a good deal of whose handwriting Canon Frind showed me, in various official documents, in the library of the chapter of Prague. Dr. Palacky further told me, that the citation is, in his opinion, apocryphal, and taken from some obscure writer, and that the story about Susanna is no older than Hajek, *i.e.*, nearly a hundred and fifty years posterior to John of Pomuk's death. The whole thing is manifestly a blunder in the appendix above-mentioned, and, indeed, runs counter to the general stream of authentic history. Wenceslas appears to have been rather an exemplary character in his day in one respect. "With regard to the fair sex" (says Palacky, iii. p. 33), "Wenceslas, unlike his brother Sigismund, appears to have remained consti-

tutionally cold and insensible ; at any rate, it was not till the last years of his life that women exercised any influence over him." There was, however, one woman whose influence over him can be frequently traced, especially in his dealings with Huss and his adherents, and that was his legitimate wife, Queen Sophia, a fact which is not easy to reconcile with the alleged martyrdom of her supposed confessor for refusing to reveal her confession.

The Abbé DOBROWSKY ("Litt. Mag. von Böhmen u. Mähren," vol. iii. pp. 101-126, 159-161), gives a full account of, and criticises the whole controversy, remarking on Dobner's "Vindiciæ" in the following words :

"It cannot be said with certainty, whether Herr Dobner was in jest or earnest. For, as he assures us at the end of his treatise, he would not have wished it printed without the express permission of the Reverend Cathedral Chapter of Prague, and yet printed it has been. He proceeds, indeed, vigorously to revile the slanderers of the inviolate seal of confession, but heaps such baseless assumptions one upon another, that one easily begins to suspect the whole so-called 'Apology.' He admits that only one John of Pomuk, *i. e.*, the general-vicar of the year 1393, ever existed, and this alone is contrary to the Acta and even the bull of the canonization. He believes, indeed, that the mistake has been only in the person, not in the thing itself. But a grosser mistake can scarcely be made than to canonize a person who never existed."

Dobrowsky also remarks, that "the great difficulty for those who would mediate between the two extremes, of the existence of two Johns of Nepomuk on the one hand, and the purely imaginary nature of the saint on the other, is this: Why is it that the archbishop, in

his articles of complaint to the Pope, says not a single word about confession? No answer to this question has ever been given that can satisfy an unprejudiced person possessed of but a modicum of common sense. To ascribe reticence, as to so purely ecclesiastical a crime, to the extreme conscientiousness of John of Jenstein, can only provoke a smile in one who has read his own description of his sensitiveness to ecclesiastical offences and his hypocrisy, in Art. xxix. of his complaint given above."

Dobrowsky further says: "So little support does Herr Dobner's hypothesis obtain from historical proofs, that it is much better to separate the supposed confessor from the general-vicar altogether. Yes, this distinction is absolutely necessary." In my opinion Dobrowsky has been carried away by his repugnance to the absurd part of Dobner's hypothesis, viz., the assumption of a secret and private reason, as well as the public and ostensible one, for Wenceslas's rage against the vicar-general, into overlooking the tokens—the earliest of which, indeed, was unknown to him—that the legend of the confessional was really attached to the historic person of the vicar-general at a very early date. But to proceed.

In 1788 the ex-Jesuit F. PUBITSCHKA published the seventh volume of his "History of Bohemia," and in 1790 a Latin Essay on the question (*Unusne an duo?*), Whether one or two canons of Prague named John of Pomuk were thrown into the Moldau by order of Wenceslas IV.? The latter he published also in German in the following year. His opinion was, that it was IRRELIGIOUS to consider the general-vicar of 1393

identical with the canonized John of Nepomuk of 1383. Further controversy on the subject appears to have been put a stop to by the wars and troubles that arose out of the French Revolution.

Finally, John Nepomuk ZIMMERMANN, in his "Vorbote," or "Precursor of a Biography of St. John of Nepomuk, Confessor of Queen Johanna, on the centenary of his canonization," Prague, 1828, endeavoured to support the hypothesis of Pubitschka. Nowák is sorely puzzled by an extraordinary statement of Zimmermann's, to the effect that Rome could have canonized a person who had never existed. But Nowák does not see that our friend Zimmermann, who, as a member of the censorship of the press, had made himself a terrible nuisance to many a better man than himself, besides (according to O. Abel, p. 25, note 2,) making use of his position in the University Library to mutilate Father Athanasius's MS., has simply failed to act the censor sufficiently to his own proof-sheets, and has carelessly omitted the negative in the sentence in question. Zimmermann meant to say, that Rome could NOT have canonized a person who had never existed; and therefore the saint's adorers might continue their devotions to him in perfect comfort, in spite of all the impertinence of critics and essayists. Zimmermann's work was suppressed by the then Archbishop of Prague, and is not often to be met with, except as a literary curiosity. The copy, which I have consulted, is in the University Library at Prague.

In 1845 appeared the first part of the third volume of Dr. F. PALACKY's "History of Bohemia," in the text of which we find the authentic dispute of Wenceslas

IV. with Archbishop John of Jenstein, and the death of John of Pomuk in consequence of the confirmation of the Abbot of Kladrau. But in a note to p. 62, Dr. Palacky observes:—"Respecting the identity or non-identity of this vicar-general, John of Pomuk or Nepomuk, with the saint of the same name canonized by Benedict XIII. on March 19, 1729, there has been since the 17th century a good deal of controversy, not altogether conducted without passion. Qualified and unqualified persons have raised their voices *pro* and *con*. A proof that will exclude all doubt is, in our opinion, no longer to be brought forward in the matter. But the mediatory view, which was first proposed by Asseman, Wokaun and Father Athanasius, and afterwards maintained by the critical master, Gelasius Dobner, in his "*Vindiciæ sigillo confessionis divi Joannis Nepomuceni protomartyris pœnitentiæ assertæ*," will always claim most respect at the bar of historical criticism. Although Dobner has several times laid himself open in this treatise, yet his thesis is in the principal point by no means so groundless or improbable, as Dobrowsky maintained in his *Lit. Mag. of Bohemia and Moravia*."

This note gave a handle for Dr. J. A. GINZEL to maintain the theory of Wokaun and Dobner in its fullest extent in part V. of the "*Ecclesiastical Encyclopædia*," published at Freiburg in 1850 by Wetzer and Welt, pp. 725-732.

In 1855 Otto Abel's posthumous work, "*The Legend of St. John of Nepomuk*" appeared at Berlin, which caused a considerable sensation, and, I may say, panic among the adherents of the saint. The especial

merit of this essay is the conclusive manner in which the question of so-called "uralt" pictures and statues of the saint is treated, and their recent origin is proved so fully, that it is not probable that any of them will be seriously relied on as evidence again. He had the use of a brief MS. essay (p. 36) written in 1790 by the painter QUIRINUS JAHN at the request of the historian PELZEL, which completely demonstrates the *very* recent origin of the picture, to which Pubitschka owed his conversion from a believer in one John of Nepomuk to a believer in two.

In 1861 Anton FRIND of Eger took up the matter in the spirit of Ginzel, and, afterwards becoming a canon of Prague, published a second edition at Prague in 1871. Frind has the management of the library belonging to the chapter, and enjoys universal esteem both among those who agree with and those who differ from him. When we find him gravely maintaining the propriety and legality of the canonization of this saint, we can only smile and say: "How use doth breed a habit in a man."

In 1862 Thomas NOWAK published in the Bohemian language what a Catholic clergyman, whom I met in the Museum Library, recommended to me as the best and fullest work on St. John Nepomucen that had yet appeared. Nowak cites Palacky's note *in extenso*, and evidently thinks it of the highest importance (p. 78). But he quite forgets, that, when Dr. Palacky wrote that note, there was in existence in Austria an institution called the "Censorship of the Press," the principal business of which was to make writers suppress or modify their opinions so as not to run counter to the

views of those in authority or the interests of the Church of Rome. And Dr. Palacky has expressly authorized me to state, that the peculiarity of the wording of his note, which has given a handle to the reverers of the saint, and has also drawn remark from Professor Reimann (p. 276), is due to its having been written while he was under the supervision of the censorship. He has also given me in writing his opinion on the subject, which I transcribe in his own words from a letter dated March 12, 1872: — “In my judgment *saint* John Nepomucen belongs solely to legend, in no wise to Bohemian history.” “Dle mého uznání náleží *sw.* Jan Nepom. jen do legendy, nikoli do historie České.”

With regard to the later supporters of the saint, I have only to remark upon their unconscientious use of the apocryphal story of Susanna the bath-maid, to bolster up the absurd idea of the queen's confession being the *private*, and the confirmation of the abbot of Kladrau being the *public* reason for Wenceslas's fury against John of Pomuk. This is just the part of the “mediatory theory,” which lacks the slightest semblance of probability, and in which Dobner lays himself most completely open, while subsequent research has shown, that the ideas, whether true or false, that John of Pomuk was or had been confessor of one of Wenceslas's queens, and that refusal to violate the seal of confession was in some way or other connected with his tragical fate, were of earlier date than supposed by Dobrowsky, and were undoubtedly attached by rumour to the vicar-general of 1393. But, as Dobrowsky has already observed, no one has ever been able to bring forward the slightest genuine proof

of a misunderstanding between Wenceslas and either of his queens. Frind in his second edition, retains the story of Susanna in his text (p. 50), but drops the reference to Adam of Neczetic, which appeared in the notes of his first edition, as if indeed he were somewhat ashamed of it.

Finally, in the second part of Heinrich von Sybel's *Historische Zeitschrift* for 1872, Professor Edward REIMANN, of Breslau, has published an excellent essay intituled, "John of Nepomuk, according to legend and according to history." In this he has gone thoroughly and exhaustively into the long-continued and cunning devices of the Jesuits, to obtain the canonization of the saint. His article was strongly recommended to me by Dr. Palacky, with whom, as well as with Professor Tomek, it is a pity he did not put himself in communication before printing it.

But to conclude. We have found that there is no contemporary evidence whatever to sustain the claim of the so-called saint to canonization, as the proto-martyr of the confessional, but that everything tends to exclude the supposition, and to prove him to have been the mere victim of a quarrel between the king and the archbishop, and not even a martyr for the immunity of the spiritual power. We have found that the first mention of him in connexion with the confessional, is a simple *report*, the existence, but not the authenticity of which is vouched for by a respectable writer, and that in terms which separate the post of confessor to the queen from the refusal to violate the seal of confession, to which common fame about forty years after his death, appears to have partly ascribed it.

We have found also, that the first mention of the queen's confession as the cause of his death, is made by an author, Paul Zidek, on whom little reliance can be placed, and who in other respects notoriously calumniated King Wenceslas IV. We have found that, after the first excitement of the cruel murder had passed away, no traces appear of any special honour paid to the martyr, as such, till the latter half of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, when, under the Jagellon dynasty (1471-1526), an unwillingness to tread on his gravestone is noted, and his grave seems to have been more or less protected by a slight railing. We have found that, fifteen years after the accession of the Hapsburg dynasty, an unconscientious writer (1541), divided him into two distinct personages, an impossible queen's confessor and martyr of the confessional in 1383, and a genuine victim of the confirmation of the Abbot of Kladrau in 1393. We have found that, at the commencement of the 17th century (1602), an ecclesiastical poet proposed his elevation to the rank of one of the patron saints of the country, and that this suggestion was, after the complete destruction of the liberties of Bohemia, followed up by the Jesuits, who wanted a patron for their favourite engine the confessional, until by dint of the most unscrupulous forgery and lying, in spite of the warnings of an honourable member of their own order, they succeeded (1729), in forcing his canonization upon the reluctant church of Rome, and then proceeded to inaugurate him as their second patron. We have found that several of the miracles ascribed to the saint are of the most scandalous and iniquitous

nature, and that a deep moral degradation of the Austrian clergy must have been synchronous with his canonization. We have found that a document was obtained from the Vatican for another purpose in 1754, which placed the historical facts of the death of the real John of Pomuk in the strongest opposition to the dualistic blunder of Hajek and the lying legend of Balbinus, upon which the whole canonization of the saint was based. We have found that, after the dissolution of the Jesuit order, a lively controversy arose among the educated classes, in which the most extravagant hypothesis was resorted to in order to reconcile historical fact with ecclesiastical fable. We have found that the supervision of the censorship of the press forced a great historian to express himself in so ambiguous a manner, that advantage was taken of his words to make it appear that he favoured the aforesaid extravagant hypothesis. We have found, finally, that this subterfuge is now closed against the supporters of the so-called saint, and that there is absolutely no excuse left for maintaining that, as such, he is anything but a creation of legend in no wise appertaining to Bohemian history.

And now, I think, I may wish the Jesuits joy of their saint, and compliment them on having forced into the calendar of the Church of Rome one whose biography, as recited and referred to in official documents, is all but a lie from beginning to end, and on having produced a magnificent solution to the problem: How to procure the canonization of a saint upon the smallest possible basis of history and fact, and the largest possible of fiction and fable. I may also com-

pliment them on having taken such a saint, so canonized, for their second patron, thus placing him, so far as they are concerned, in immediate juxtaposition to our blessed Lord himself. Rarely has a greater blunder been perpetrated for a temporary advantage, nor would it be easy to find an instance, in which the peculiarities of the Jesuit order display themselves in more unmistakeable and vivid colours. It is, indeed, marvellous, that, when a careless and unscrupulous chronicler had divided an historical character into two distinct personages, one real and the other imaginary, the astute and sagacious Jesuits should have moved heaven and earth and practised a considerable amount of dishonesty to procure the canonization of THE WRONG ONE.

FINIS.

G



PRINTED BY WHITTINGHAM AND WILKINS,
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

